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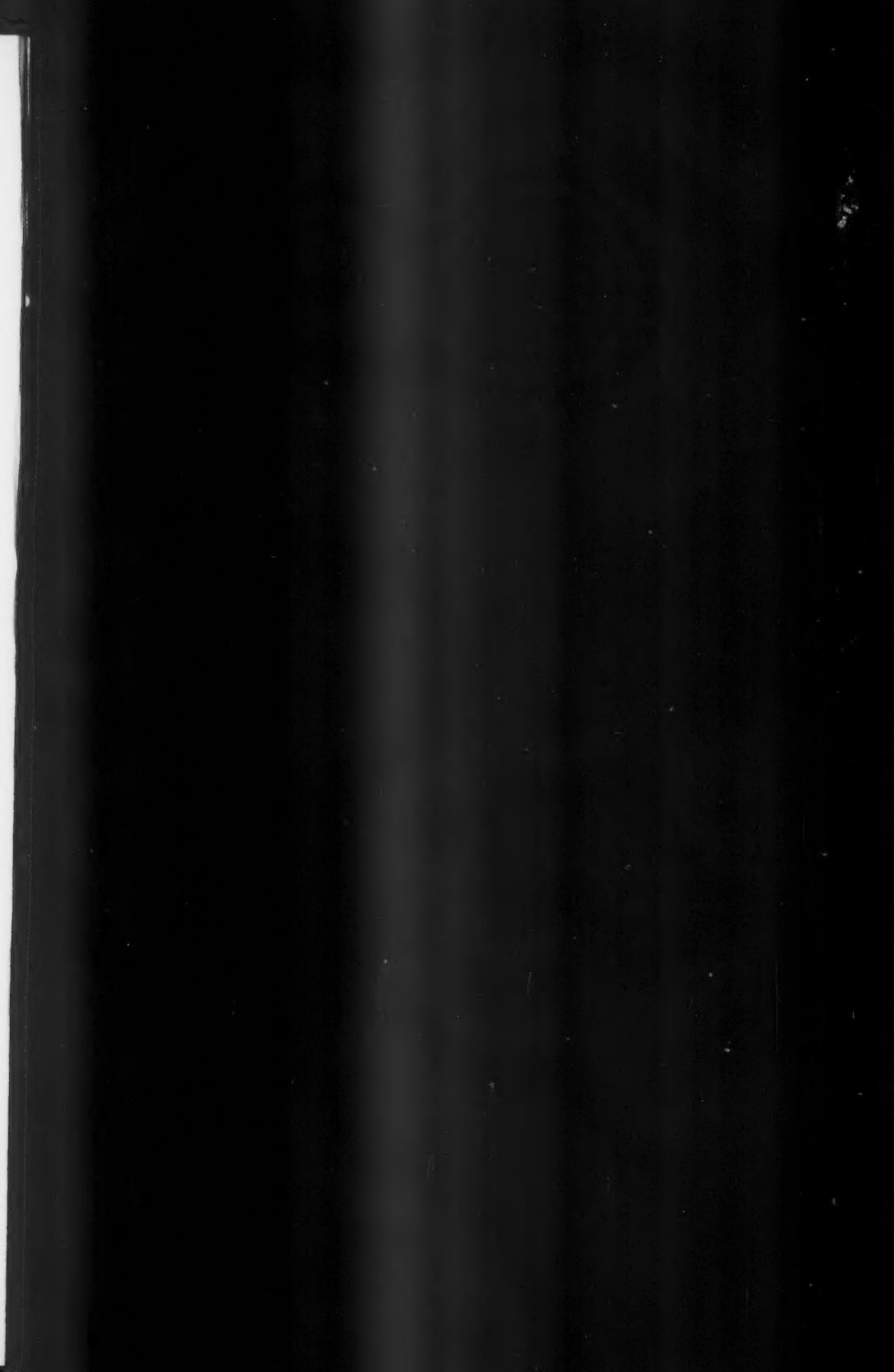
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THE MUSIC REVIEW

Edited by GEOFFREY SHARP

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Contingencies

BY

CECIL GRAY

PART I

THOSE who lived through the years 1914-18 will remember that they were productive of a vast amount of active speculation concerning the probable and possible effects of the war upon art. While those with progressive sympathies rejoiced at the prospective crumbling of the bulwarks of effete tradition as a result of the upheaval, through which they would triumphantly float to power and influence, the representatives of reactionary tendencies were similarly pleased to think that the war would put an end to all that "modern" nonsense and would usher in a period characterized by a reversion to what they considered saner and more normal ideals. On the main issue both contending factions were fundamentally in agreement, namely, that everything was going to be quite different from what it had been in the years prior to 1914. Each of them, in fact, would have been more prepared to admit the likelihood of its own discomfiture and overthrow than the possibility that everything would go on in the same way as before.

Which, of course, is apparently what happened. After the temporary jolt and dislocation entailed by the conflict, life, and with it art, resumed much the same course as before, in all essentials. The academics went on being academic, and the revolutionaries revolutionary, as if nothing had happened; in no respect was there any visibly important change.

To-day there is once more a recrudescence of speculation concerning the effect of the present war upon art, and the probable changes it will bring about in the art of the future. It is natural that there should be, but while indulging in it we shall be wise to bear in mind the experience of the preceding generation, and the prosaic, negative outcome of all their wishful thinking—to use the hackneyed but inevitable phrase.

Even with this warning example before us, however, it is difficult—impossible, rather—to resist the conclusion that there is a fundamental difference between the two wars. The former one, apart from its gigantic scale, was not in essence very different from most of the other wars which have been waged since the beginning of history—a struggle between jealous rival nations and conflicting interests of a predominantly material and commercial order. Ingenious, but mostly ingenuous, propaganda on both sides was able to evolve all manner of ideological justifications for the conflict, but they only succeeded in convincing those who wished to be convinced, and in preaching to the converted. Democracy and the rights of the smaller nations, for example, sounded very well until one reflected that Czarist Russia was on the same side as the angel Democracies, and that Ireland was a small nation. The

propaganda on the other side was too grotesque to be taken seriously by anyone.

The present war, on the other hand, is not primarily materialistic or commercial, but rather idealistic and ideological—a conflict between two opposed and irreconcilable ways of life. There is, indeed, a profound difference in feeling between the two wars which everyone who has had the misfortune to live under both must inevitably recognize. If the war of 1914–18 did not affect the arts to any appreciable extent, the reason is that it did not go deep enough. The present conflict, on the contrary, has its roots far down in the very soil from which art itself springs. On the former occasion the war, however immense in scale and tragic in human implications, was essentially external. It was possible for the artist, provided he survived physically, to escape from it into an ivory tower of his own construction, or into the recesses of his inner consciousness. To-day no such escape is possible. It is not merely that everyone is more immediately and directly involved, or that no ivory tower yet constructed can stand up to high explosive bombs—it is more fundamental than that. It is no longer possible to take refuge within oneself, because even if we try to do so we find the conflict raging there as violently as in the outside world. In every artist to-day, in every sentient, pensive personality, the same tragic struggle is being waged; and even were one to travel to Peru or the Argentine one would take it with one. There is, in truth, no escape to-day, for any one, from the death pangs of the old world and the birth pangs of the new—for that is what is happening now, beyond any possibility of doubt.

The present war, in fact, is not just 1914–18 all over again, or continued; everyone who think or feels knows deep down in himself that the old order, for better or for worse, has gone and will never return. Nothing is more remarkable than the tacit unanimity with which this is conceded. Not even the most crusted and hide-bound Tory attempts to delude himself, or others, that there is the slightest chance of a restoration of the old world order, and this is as true in matters of art as in politics or anything else. One may even doubt whether anyone, in his heart of hearts, really wants it, for it is already dead, beyond recall. The recognition of the necessity for a "new order" is, in fact, by no means confined to the Axis Powers. The only points of divergence are, the nature of this new order, and who is to have the making of it. Its inevitability is nowhere seriously disputed.

The war itself even, is ultimately irrelevant—it is a symptom, not a cause. The impending dissolution of the old world, and the impending birth of the new, had been apparent to every thinking person long before the tragic conflict had begun. All it has done has been to precipitate, accelerate, and exteriorize, in the domain of international politics, an inevitable historical and spiritual process.

Events in the world of politics and action, generally speaking, are seldom anything but a coarse and crooked refraction of what has already taken place in the field of thought and art. In precisely the same way that the French Revolution took place in the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, d'Alembert and innumerable others, long before it found political realization; so the new order of the immediate future is clearly adumbrated by many

thinkers, chief amongst them Nietzsche, Karl Marx and before them, Hegel, who is the Janus-faced father of both Communism and Nazism by way of the Marxian dialectical materialism on the one hand, and the doctrine of the absolute totalitarian State on the other. They are, in fact, twin births. Their superficial hostility is that of brothers, springing from the fact that they understand each other only too well, and have so much in common. The greatest hatreds and antagonisms are those of affinities, of relations. No wars are more bitter than civil wars.

Nor are literature and philosophy the only channels through which new currents of thought and feeling first manifest themselves. On the contrary, all the arts share to some extent in this prophetic, anticipatory, premonitory rôle. Verdi, for example, was the real creator of the Italian *Risorgimento*; neither Mazzini and the intellectuals who preceded him, nor the men of action, Cavour, Garibaldi, who followed him, could have succeeded if he had not lit the flame in every Italian heart by means of his music. Note too, how the passing of the contemporary old order is symbolically anticipated in the "dying fall" which is such a familiar characteristic of the music of the last generation—the way in which the music at the end of a work ebbs away and fades into silence and nothingness—a procedure that has no parallel in the music of any other period. Debussy and Delius are in this respect the most characteristic exemplifications. See also in this connection the similar endings, in literature, of *Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake* of James Joyce, and T. S. Eliot's:—

This is the way the world ends, not with a bang but a whimper.

All real wars and battles, the ones that really matter in the history of the world, first take place in the soul of man, and it is there that the issues are decided, not on battlefields or in political conferences. Nothing of importance is ever decided by force of arms—that is a vast delusion. As often as not, in history, the cause which ultimately triumphs is not the one which achieves the most superficially spectacular victories. The military successes of Napoleon, for example, outnumbered and outweighed his defeats, but he left France smaller and weaker than he found her. At the same time, the ideas of the Revolution, of which he was the instrument, spread all over Europe in spite of his ultimate military defeat.

In any case, military issues are generally decided by some completely fortuitous, accidental occurrence, of an essentially comic order. In no other form of human activity, except cards and horse-racing perhaps, does the element of pure chance play such a dominating rôle. To take Napoleon again, we are told by competent military historians that he only lost the battle of Waterloo owing to the fact that one of his commanders kept his troops marching backwards and forwards in wrong directions during the whole course of operations and only arrived on the field when it was too late and all was over. If he had got to the right place at the right time, Napoleon would in all probability have won the battle. But would it have made much difference in the long run? It is more than doubtful. The issues at stake had already been decided; the military decision was irrelevant.

Incidentally, this general's name was Grouchy, but it should have been Groucho, the most eminent of the Brothers Marx, of whom one is irresistibly reminded, especially in the battle sequence of *Duck Soup*. In the world of ideas, indeed, events may, and probably do, march with the inexorable logic and inevitability proclaimed by Karl Marx, but in the world of action they generally happen much more in accordance with the conceptions of the Marx Brothers. And with the best will in the world, it is impossible to take such comic turns as Hitler and Mussolini any more seriously than the Marx fraternity. They have even much in common—the same streak of sinister sadism, for example. The disappointment one experienced in seeing *The Great Dictator* of Charles Chaplin derived from the fact that the original was so much more richly comic than the caricature. Actually, the photographic sequence, which appeared in illustrated papers, of Hitler receiving the news of the French capitulation, was very much funnier than anything in the Chaplin film.

The truth is that statesmen and politicians are nearly always comic or second-rate figures, and it is only natural that they should be, for the very simple reason that no one would ever want to be a politician who could succeed at anything else. The desire to dominate others is in itself a sign of inferiority, shared by dictators and women. Politics are the last resort of failures, and it is no coincidence that Hitler and Mussolini began life as unsuccessful artists—painter and writer respectively—and that Goebbels and Ciano were both spectacularly unsuccessful dramatists before taking to politics. Even Napoleon himself, as a young man, began with literary ambitions, and Disraeli is another good example of a second-rate artist becoming an eminent statesman.

Mr. Churchill is another case in point. As a politician, he is, of course, in the first rank. He writes well, but not better than many hundreds of comparatively unknown writers at the present time, while as a painter he is not much, if at all, better than Hitler. (Incidentally, it is a remarkable coincidence that the war is being waged under the leadership of an undistinguished water-colour painter on one side, and an undistinguished oil-painter on the other. "It makes you think", in fact, as Mr. Nathaniel Gubbins' immortal Sweep would say.)

The truth would seem to be that the amount of talent required to make a successful statesman or politician will not get one very far in a purely intellectual or aesthetic activity; and, further, that second-rate and unsuccessful, disappointed artists, are, to-day at least, the commonest material out of which successful rulers of men are made.

It is, in fact, one of the most ominous signs of the times in which we live that artists who have failed almost invariably take to politics, as other men take to drink, in order to drown their sense of failure, and in order to realize in the sphere of action the conceptions—and the ambitions—they have failed to realize in art. The ranks of all political parties are filled with these aesthetic renegades.

Major artists, on the other hand, are almost always hopeless failures on the few occasions when they misguidedly meddle in practical politics, like Lamartine, or Chateaubriand, or Sheridan. They have too much talent for

it, in fact, and only succeed in wasting their time and—or—in making egregious idiots of themselves.

The moral of all this is that art is art and politics are politics, and never the twain should be allowed to meet; that most of the trouble in the world to-day springs from the presence, at the head of political affairs, of inferior painters and writers and dramatists; and from the would-be artistic activities of persons who would be more fitly employed in affairs of State, or should be given posts as civil servants or schoolmasters. (A surprisingly large proportion of contemporary poets, incidentally, have begun as such, and should have continued as such—(Auden and Co. for example).) One even feels, sometimes, that Sir Thomas Beecham, with all his gifts as a conductor, is essentially a politician *manqué*—that he would have made one of the greatest Prime Ministers England has ever had in her history if he had followed his natural bent. The same is true of Sir Osbert Sitwell, who is a politician rather than an artist.

It is difficult to say which is the worse of the two—the artist turned politician, or the politician turned artist. The result in either case is bad art, bad politics, and bad everything else. The confusion of the two activities poisons the world to-day, and this applies equally to all schools of political thought, whether Liberal or Conservative, Fascist or Communist, Nazi or Anarchist, and to all arts, whether literature or painting, sculpture or architecture—or music.

Mr. Calder Marshall, a characteristic exemplar of the amphibious type of artist-politician, has said in a recent essay in *The New Statesman* entitled "The Pink Decade" dealing with his fellow writers of the 1930's, that he and his kind failed because, in spite of their (to him) laudable sentiments, in matters political, they did not take a sufficiently active part in carrying them into practice, and that "the artists of the thirties who will interest posterity are the men of action, Malraux, Bates, Silone".

Actually, Malraux is the only one of the trio with any claim to be considered an artist at all. Silone may be an able political propagandist who has written a very readable novel *Fontamara*, but it has no claim to be regarded as a great, or even a good, work of art. As for Bates, he is a complete mediocrity from every point of view, without the first idea of how to write. In the sphere of art, they are all insignificant, and they do not appear to be any more successful as men of action than they are as politicians. They are simply neither one thing nor the other.

At this point I seem to hear shrill bat-like squeaks and squeals from the Left Wing, which I must hasten to mute to the best of my poor abilities. The above strictures apply just as much to their opposite numbers in the political sphere—there is absolutely no difference between them in this respect. Ezra Pound, now "on the spot" for broadcasting Fascist propaganda over the Italian air; Wyndham Lewis, one of the finest writers of our time and a draughtsman, if not a painter, of genius, now—at the time of writing—languishing in obscurity in Canada, largely as a result of having written pathetically naïve eulogies of Hitler in pre-war days; Roy Campbell, the greatest English poet of his generation, who fought on the side of Franco in the

Spanish Civil War, thereby producing his feeblest volume of verse, *Flowering Rifle*—these are just as culpably futile in their political activities as their opponents of the Left Wing. The only difference between the two consists in the fact that Lewis and Campbell—I specifically except Ezra Pound—are finer artists than their opposites, but that is neither here nor there. No political significance should be attached to that coincidence—for it is nothing more. A plague on both their houses!

Among the scanty surviving fragments of Pythagoras is a repeated and emphatic injunction to his disciples to "abstain from beans", which puzzled learned commentators for centuries on account of its seeming frivolity, until it was realized that it was not, as at first supposed, the condition of physiological flatulence commonly engendered by eating the *faba vulgaris* that was the cause of the sage's censure, but the fact that in his time it was the custom to register votes in political elections by dropping beans into urns in accordance with one's convictions. In other words, Pythagoras' vehement injunction to initiates, "Miserable wretches! keep your hands from beans!" meant simply, "Have nothing to do with politics!" And to the modern artist one would utter the same warning.

This is not to say that the artist should be forbidden to entertain any political sentiments or convictions, but merely that he should take no active part in political activities. In so far as he is a human being he is bound to have some political views, but in so far as he is an artist he must not attempt to put them into practice. His rôle is that of spectator—not of participant. A spectator is not necessarily indifferent. On the contrary, his emotions can be just as violent as those of the active participant. One might even go so far as to say that they are more violent, but they are of a different order. The fact remains that the moment he leaves the auditorium and, carried away by his feelings, leaps upon the stage and begins to take an active part in the proceedings, he not merely interferes with the play, but also stultifies himself.

It is an accepted truism that the spectator sees more of the game than the player and is probably more emotionally moved by it, but it is the artist's sacred duty to keep his place as a spectator and not to interfere and take sides. Only by so refraining can he fulfil the lofty function for which he was intended in the scheme of things. The emotion attendant on the active participation in events is a very agreeable one, no doubt, and there is a great temptation to give way to it; but it is a grave dereliction of duty in one who aspires, however humbly, to the honourable appellation of artist; for in so far as he is an artist he is necessarily, inevitably, fatally, condemned to separation and detachment from his fellow men. It is his burden, his tragedy, if you like, but the penalty for the infringement of this natural law is artistic suicide. He ceases to be an artist, but without becoming anything else. The more eagerly he tries to overcome this primary condition of his being, the more completely he fails. When the artist of genuine creative talent seeks to play an active rôle in politics, it is as if the conductor of an orchestra were to lay down his bâton and to insist on taking the second bassoon part—and incidentally, playing it very badly as a rule. A good example of this is to be found in the grotesque

performance on the bassoon of M. Jules Romains, the distinguished French novelist and author of *Men of Good Will*, as recorded by himself in his recent postposterous book entitled *The Seven Mysteries of Europe*.

To this it might perhaps be objected that there are cases in history in which eminent creative artists have played a decisive rôle in political events—Byron, for example, and Gabriele d'Annunzio. The fact remains that the achievement of Greek independence would have come without the active intervention of Byron, that the prestige of his poetry was the determining factor in the success of the cause, and that in any case he would have been better engaged in carrying on with his *Don Juan*; while, as for d'Annunzio, he had ceased to be an artist of importance long before he took to politics. He is, indeed, the best example discoverable of what has been said above—that it is impossible to be an artist and a politician at the same time. You must make your choice, you cannot have it both ways. And the artist—and we mean by that the genuine artist—not the pseudo-artist or aesthete—who deliberately chooses to sacrifice his art for the sake of political action is guilty of a crime, the sin against the Holy Ghost of whom he is the mouthpiece, the chosen instrument.

Thought precedes action, art anticipates politics, as we have already had occasion to observe. To renounce art in favour of politics is to abandon the substance for the shadow. Politics are only a second-hand, crude, belated and imperfect realization, in the material sphere, of ideas and conceptions already full realized in the domain of art and pure thought. The function and the duty of the artist is, not to attempt the wholly superfluous task of bringing to fruition in the field of present political action the values of yesterday's thinkers and artists (superfluous, because it will be and can be better accomplished by others and without his assistance)—but rather to play a part in the inception and formation of the ideas, values, concepts which are destined to be the guiding principles of to-morrow. That is the rôle of the artist; to be a pioneer, not a camp-follower; a prophet, not a politician. The artist who refrains from meddling in politics, and "keeps his hands from beans", is not, as so many callow, half-baked intellectuals to-day suppose, an escapist. It is he who is, on the contrary, in touch with reality; it is they who are the escapists.

In this connection should be cited a highly apposite passage from Mr. Cyril Connolly's *Enemies of Promise*:—

Often a writer who is escaping from his own talent, from the hound of heaven, will run into what appears to be reality and, like a fox bolting into a farm kitchen, will seek sanctuary in group activities from the pursuers outside. And after a time the hounds will be called off, the pursuit weaken, a signal that the Muses no longer wish to avail themselves of his potentialities. Thus, among the hardest workers in political parties will be found, like Rimbaud at Harar, those whom the God has forsaken.

Arthur Rimbaud, who at an early age suddenly gave up writing and became a merchant in Abyssinia, is the most conspicuous and celebrated example in history of an artist of talent, of genius even, who turned his back on his art. For this act of apostasy he has always been venerated and held up as a noble example by all artists who have similarly become disillusioned and uncertain of themselves; the idea being that in so doing he renounced Illusion for

Reality, the Ivory Tower for the Market Place, Art in favour of Life (all with very large capital letters). This is, of course, nothing but an inverted ninety-ish aestheticism, and only incompletely inverted at that. The fact that Rimbaud became an Abyssinian trader in ivory and frankincense casts a tawdry glamour, in the large watery sheeps' eyes of our aesthetes, over the sordid fact that a heaven-born (or rather hell-born) talent surrendered his birthright in order to become a kind of grocer with the frankly avowed ambition of making money. One doubts whether they would become so ecstatically admiring if he had become an *épiciier* in Menilmontant—yet that is what, in essence, and robbed of its romantic trappings, he did.

The plain unvarnished truth about Arthur Rimbaud is that he could not face himself and his problems, and his artistic difficulties, and that he ran away from them, and sought refuge in the existence of a typical French *petit bourgeois* from the terrible and terrifying realities which confronted him. It is a familiar type, particularly in France. Montparnasse used to be full of them—young artists who eventually became *sages* and gave up their work in favour of a safe commercial career. There is no mystery about it, and there should be no halo. Rimbaud's sole desire in his later years was to make a little money and marry, settle down, and live respectably, like a good French *bourgeois*.

A very reasonable and understandable ambition, and one which every artist must experience at some time or other in his career when the dark night of the soul descends upon him and he doubts himself and his art and everything else—and the greater the artist the oftener and the more intensely does he experience it. Art is the hardest and most exacting vocation on earth, and one can well understand and sympathize with any man who modestly finds it too much for him, or himself unequal to it, and decides he had better give it up and try something else. All one objects to is the attempt to make a virtue out of his deficiency—which, to do him justice, Rimbaud never attempted to do—to represent himself as superior to the mere artist, and to have discovered a Higher Reality than mere art. Even worse is the Sidney Carton attitude so many examples of the type assume, in pretending to sacrifice the selfish sweets and joys of the artistic life for the rigours and hardships of politics and reality in the service of humanity. "It is a far, far better thing that I do", etc. This is truly insufferable. He who does so is not a hero but a coward, a traitor, a renegade. He is given by God, or whatever inscrutable power it is that created life and living things, the rarest and most precious of all gifts, and he throws it away. He has no right to do so, even, for it is not his to dispose of. It belongs to the whole of mankind; he is only a custodian with a sacred trust. The artist is no more free to do what he likes than a king is. He has not even the latter's right to abdicate, for there is no one to take his place, no one else who can do exactly what he can do.

The plain, prosaic truth is that the artist's function is to create works of art, and that this is a whole-time job, and one that demands everything a man has to give, and more. No one can hope to be a good artist who has any time or energy to spare for politics, which is also a whole-time job; and there can be no hope for art in the new world which is to come unless and until the fatal

confusion which has grown up between art and politics in recent times is broken down.

Both governments and artists have been equally to blame for this—Communist and Fascist attempts to dictate to the artist what he must think and say and do, and even the way in which he has to do it, and on the other hand attempts on his part to interfere in matters which do not or should not concern him. If there is anything worse than State interference in matters of art, it is artists interfering in affairs of State. The artist must be free to express himself in his work as he wishes—this right must be inviolable—but in return for this privilege, he should refrain from making a nuisance of himself. His political convictions, like his religion and his sexual life, are his own affair, as long as they remain private, but if he insists on putting them into practice in the market place he has only himself to blame for the consequences. It is a form of indecent exposure. In the lamentable controversy which took place two or three years ago over the signatories to the so-called "People's Convention", both parties were equally to blame; the B.B.C. for attempting to dictate to artists the kind of political views they were to be allowed to hold, and the artists for trying to interfere in matters which did not concern them, as artists—for their signatures were requested and given *in their capacity of artists*, be it remembered and not of mere private individuals, Tom, Dick, Harry, to which no one could have taken exception, but to which no one would have paid any attention.

The matter is of primary importance, because if artists do not learn prudence in this respect, there is a danger that in this country in the future they may find themselves in the same unpleasant position as their comrades in totalitarian states. And that is simply the death of art.

Verdi remains the perfect example of the attitude which the artist should endeavour to maintain with regard to politics. It need hardly be said that no one was ever further from being an art-for-art's-sake aesthete, dwelling apart in an ivory tower, or indifferent to the problems which beset humanity. On the contrary, he was a passionate patriot and, as already observed, probably did more to bring about the *Risorgimento* than any other single individual. But he resolutely refused to take any part in politics as such. He was made a senator of the new kingdom of Italy, but against his will, and took no active part in parliamentary proceedings. If, swept away by facile emotion in his youth, he had given up his work in order to become a member of the *Carbonari*, not only would the world have been poorer, through the loss of his music, but also the very political cause he had so much at heart.

The moral of all this is, that if an artist's work is animated by passionate political convictions, he can disseminate and propagate them, but only through his work; that if he wishes to wield political power and influence he can do so, but only by writing good books or music or painting good pictures—not by making speeches, serving on political committees, or signing manifestos.

The writer of the present essay takes the opportunity here afforded to state that he has no political convictions whatever, save for an occasional leaning towards Jacobitism (as distinct from Jacobinism—who was Jacob anyway?)

on the one hand and Nihilism on the other; and since neither of these creeds can be said to be practical politics, it follows that he has no political axe to grind. The only axe he has to grind is that of art, and from its grinding the sparks will now begin to fly.

* * * * *

Let us turn to the consideration of the form of art, and more particularly that of music—the art with which we are here primarily concerned—which is likely to prevail in the days to come, after the war is ended.

Many people, of course, believe that there will be no art at all, worth speaking of: that art, being the delicate flower and fragile blossom of civilization, must inevitably be the first thing to go, and artists the first people to suffer.

The present writer does not share this view. He believes on the contrary that art, so far from being a frail and fragile blossom, is an extraordinarily strong and tenacious growth, and artists remarkably tough and resilient people. They have to be, in order to survive at all, like adventurers in other walks of life who have to live from hand to mouth, from day to day, quite literally by their wits, and taking no thought for the morrow. As for art, it is no doubt perfectly true that much, if not most of it produced by the order of civilization which is now dying, was an exotic hot-house plant, and that it will wither away if it has not already done so, but it is not true of art as a whole. The form of art which is only a kind of spiritual luxury will certainly go, like all other luxuries, for the time being. It is inevitable. Life is going to be very much harder in future, and for a long time to come, and art also will be harder, simpler, plainer. The caviare and *pâté de foie gras*, the champagne and oysters, the brandy and cigars of art, as well as of life, of the soul as well as of the body, are going, if not already gone, and a very sad business it is in many ways. No wishful thinking here. No one could be more blissfully and unrepentantly addicted to such joys in both the spiritual and physical worlds than the present writer, but one must face the facts, however disagreeable.

But just as food is a bodily necessity in some shape or form, as well as a possible luxury, so art is a spiritual necessity as well as a luxury. Mankind cannot live without it. The specious view of Hegel and others to the effect that art belongs merely to an early phase of human development, and that it has already outlived its prime and is virtually a moribund anachronism to-day, must be emphatically rejected. Among the earliest records we possess of the existence of the human race are works of art—and very good ones too—such as the cave-paintings of Altamira and the Dordogne, and they will probably be among the last records of the human race. As for music, D. H. Lawrence has said somewhere that "In the beginning was not the word, but a chirrup", a lark singing in the dawn of time; and in the great night of the universe, when the sun has entered upon an irrevocable decline, and the last stars are being gradually extinguished, one by one, like guttering candles, the final expression of sentient life will probably be the song of the nightingale.

There is even a considerable amount of good scientific evidence to support the view that the world itself, the entire created universe, is itself a work of art,

that God is an artist, and that on no other basis or supposition can the scheme of things become intelligible. At any rate, all attempts to explain or justify it according to the tenets of religion or philosophy or ethics or morality have so far failed, and are likely to continue to do so; but once accept it as a magnificent (and frequently preposterous) spectacle, and all difficulties vanish away.

However that may be, art has always existed in the world from the earliest times up to the present day, and it is therefore reasonable to suppose that it will continue to do so. In any case it will take more than a war, however catastrophic, to eradicate an instinct which is as natural to man as eating, drinking and copulation. It is as fundamental as these—no less.

Many who would agree with this contention in general, nevertheless regard the immediate future of artistic activities with deep misgiving, on account of the acute financial stringency which, in their view, must inevitably ensue upon the conclusion of hostilities, in consequence of which there will be no money available for such superfluous luxuries as art.

This argument is, of course, only a corollary to the foregoing one, and the answer to it, so far as it has not already been made, is that, firstly, if we can find fourteen million pounds a day for the war (this is the figure at the time of writing—it is probably much larger now) there should be no difficulty in finding the few hundreds a day which should be more than enough to establish artistic activities on a more secure basis in this country than they have ever yet enjoyed. If the desire, the demand, the need are there, the money will be forthcoming.

But in any case the argument is rooted in a fallacy. The chief trouble with art, in the days before the war, consisted in the fact, not that too little money was spent on it, but too much. That it was spent in the wrong way, dissipated in wrong directions and objectives, may be true, but does not alter the fact. A few suggestive observations from an article in *The Observer* by C. A. Lejeune, the film critic, aptly illustrate this point:—

The nations that suffered most from the (last) war, Germany and France, began within a couple of years, to build up the finest cinema they had ever known. Out of material poverty came richness of ideas. Out of devastation came renaissance. . . . The early and middle 20's saw the Golden Age of the German cinema. Cut off from the outside world, with little money to spend, the Germans fell back on their own rich store of invention and legend . . . the best films have always come from pinched nations shut down on their own resources.

It does not, of course, necessarily follow that what is true of the cinema is true of the fine arts; but, nevertheless, I believe it is fundamentally true that vast sums of money lavished on artistic enterprises, or paid to artists, do more harm than good, both to art and to the artist. Too much money is just as bad as too little, and probably worse. Too little starves the body, but too much kills the soul.

Contrary to the generally accepted belief, great art does not often go hand in hand with an exceptionally high degree of material ease and prosperity, whether we are speaking of civilizations, races, nations, classes, or individuals. One could even go so far as to say that peoples living in a comparatively primitive state of culture have a more direct, instinctive, and vital appreciation

of art than those which have enjoyed luxury, ease and opulence. At the Porta Capuana in Naples, for example, one used to hear professional reciters reeling off whole cantos of Dante, Ariosto and Tasso, to an enraptured and enthusiastic audience of illiterate peasants and workers, while at cafés near-by one would see the members of the upper or middle classes—the so-called educated classes—immersed in their daily newspapers.

Similarly in Florence, when the simple hard-working men and women of the city and environs enjoy a brief spell of leisure, you will see them in their hundreds thronging the galleries of the Pitti and Uffizi, but you will find few of their "betters" there—they prefer a different kind of picture house. Again, the opera houses of Italy are filled with large and enthusiastic audiences made up chiefly of the common people; the upper strata of society for the most part prefer jazz, and dancing in smart hotels. In Italy an artist, as such, is an object of respect and even veneration to the masses; the aristocracy and middle classes prefer to pay homage to the heroes of the football field or the motor race-track.

The secret of the strength of Italian art, and particularly music, in the past, is largely to be found in this immediate contact and understanding that exists between the artist and the people. It is also the source of its weakness, of course; great works such as *Otello* and *Falstaff* have never been really successful in Italy—they appeal only to the few. But, taken all in all, the advantages outweigh the defects.

In France precisely the contrary conditions obtain. The average Frenchman and Frenchwoman of the working classes are probably more completely indifferent to any form of fine art, and to music in particular, than any other people in the world. On the other hand, there is probably in France a larger proportion of members of the upper classes of society capable of taking an intelligent interest in the higher manifestations of art than anywhere else, and in the subtleties and refinements of style, especially where literature is concerned; and the existence of this large, select, and discriminating audience has, of course, exercised a considerable influence on artists in that country.

This also has its great merits and advantages, and also its defects. One might say that if the chief virtue of Italian art, in general, consists in the fact that it is almost a physical necessity, a kind of food, like bread or wine, fruit or vegetables, French art tends rather to be an embellishment or enhancement of living, like flowers. The difference between them can perhaps be best symbolized by comparing the signification we attached to the words meaning "taste" in the two languages—*gusto* and *goût*. They are at root the same word, and ostensibly possess the same meaning, but their overtones and implications are very different.

If in Italy art is essentially popular and proletarian in its appeal, and in France primarily aristocratic, in Germany art has chiefly been directed at and appreciated by the middle classes; and while the appeal of Italian music is largely sensual, of French music intellectual, that of German music is chiefly emotional.

All three traditions, as already suggested, have their drawbacks and

deficiencies. Italian art is often coarse, crude, blatant; French art is often dry, mannered and emasculate; German art is often sloppy, sentimental and effusive; but these faults are in the balance greatly outweighed by the positive advantage that the artist has, in each of these countries, in possessing a solid background of tradition, and a potential audience willing to pay attention to him.

In this country nothing of the kind exists. Neither upper nor lower nor middle class as a whole, or even in part, cares for any form of art, and perhaps, least of all for music. The artist has no cultural background, no national tradition, no public, save for a few individuals scattered here and there in upper, lower and middle classes indiscriminately, and possessing no lowest common denominator or highest common factor. Otherwise the only support music has enjoyed in these islands in modern times has been of the kind generally accorded to religion, and due to a belief that music is in some vague, unspecified way, good for the soul, like going to church on Sunday; and all the more salutary for being a bit boring—for if it were too enjoyable it would not be so improving, or uplifting, or edifying. Hence, incidentally, the enormous vogue of Brahms in this country, so much greater than in the land of his birth. Brahms has almost become a British composer by naturalization.

The inevitable consequence of these conditions has been a complete lack in this country of that element of tradition and continuity which one finds elsewhere. Indeed, one might almost say that this is itself a definite national characteristic—that our great figures have always tended to appear as isolated individuals rather than as members of a school, or participants in a universally recognized and appreciated tradition—uniqueness, separateness, isolation, in fact, might paradoxically enough be regarded as the English tradition, and characteristic of the national genius in all walks of life. We rather pride ourselves on this tendency. We speak, for example, of “our one and only Shakespeare”, and most of the great figures in our literature are similarly unique and singular. So in painting—Hogarth, Blake, Turner, Constable, are all detached, isolated individuals. So in music, with our one and only Purcell, and his one and only opera, *Dido and Aeneas*. Even in political history, it is interesting to note, one finds the same curious propensity for producing a solitary specimen in a category—for example, our one and only Holy Roman Emperor, Richard of Cornwall, and our one and only Pope, Nicholas Breakespeare, who took the title of Hadrian IV (“our one and only Breakespeare”, as Joyce has it in *Finnegan's Wake*)—and other examples could be multiplied indefinitely.

This tradition also has its advantages and its defects, but here the defects outweigh the advantages. It does not matter so much in literature which, in any case, is the one and only art which has always enjoyed a certain measure of public support in this country. All that is necessary in order to write is a pen or pencil and a writing pad, and there is never much difficulty in finding a publisher, or for a painter to find one or two intelligent patrons. So far as these arts are concerned our traditional individualism works out fairly well in practice, with, of course, a few regrettable casualties *en route*. But if anyone in this country should be so ill advised or regrettably constituted as to wish to erect cathedrals or carve blocks of marble, or write symphonies or operas,

even a comfortable private income will prove inadequate to the problems involved in the material realization of his conceptions. In these arts the lack of any organized public demand is fatal, especially in music. Even the most enthusiastic and richly endowed composer after twenty or more years of creative activity under such circumstances begins to ask himself whether it is worth while to go on writing masterpieces for his own personal pleasure, which are for the most part destined to remain unrealized, unpublished, unperformed, in a drawer of his writing desk. After all, a work of art is essentially a collaboration between creator and recipient; all the more so in music in which the work does not, strictly speaking, exist on paper, but only in the act of performance. Elgar, in comparison with most of his colleagues a spectacularly successful composer, once observed that it was impossible for any English composer to reach the age of sixty (I quote from memory, but the exact words are immaterial) without becoming completely cynical and disillusioned.

It is an exceedingly depressing state of affairs; all the more so because there is no reason to believe that there is less potential musical talent in this country than in any other, or that intrinsically the British public is less musical than any other public. As I have pointed out in *Predicaments*, history shows that there is no such thing as a specifically musical or unmusical nation—that the most musical at certain periods becomes the least so at others, and *vice versa*; that in the sixteenth century, England was probably the most musical race in Europe and Germany the least; that there is no reason why it should not be so again, and that there is every reason to suppose that it will.

But before any such reversal or transformation can take place a change must come about, or be brought about, in the attitude of the public to art generally, and to music in particular in this country. It is impossible for an art such as music to thrive, or even to be in a moderately healthy condition, which has virtually no audience apart from a sprinkling of aesthetes and "highbrows", forming a kind of layer of sugar icing on the stodgy plum-cake of British philistinism. A composer cannot live—and by living one means something much more than mere physical and financial subsistence—through contact with this thin veneer or upper crust of intelligent appreciation alone. Without a substratum of popular appeal no art can be healthy or vital.

[To be continued.]

Mozart's Piano Music

BY

A. HYATT KING

FOR most people who are interested in piano music, whether as listeners or performers, the name of Mozart is associated with those eighteen or nineteen sonatas for two hands which have come to be regularly published together in a single volume. It is these which are most studied and analysed in the various schools of music and most often played at concerts. Yet good as the best of them are, they do not represent either in bulk or quality the true worth of Mozart's contribution to music for the piano unsupported by orchestral or chamber players. There are, in fact, nearly sixty other works (apart from the collection of 43 little pieces composed by him at the age of eight, and a later group of unimportant minuets, K315a), and the best of them are as fine as they are little known. Considering the restricted public interest in the works lying outside the accepted corpus, it is not altogether surprising that there does not exist in any language a study of Mozart's piano music as a whole. We can, of course, refer to Wyzewa and Saint-Foix for a laudatory and fairly detailed criticism of each particular work up till 1784; to Abert for a more general discussion of the various groups of sonatas, fantasias and miscellaneous pieces; and to Haas for some acute observations from the point of view of stylistic origins and analogies. There is, however, no book such as that which C. M. Girdlestone has recently devoted to the study of Mozart's piano concertos, or those written on notable groups in the music of other masters—Bach's church cantatas, for example, or his "Forty-eight", or Beethoven's quartets and piano sonatas. We cannot, indeed, maintain that Mozart's piano music *in toto* is so outstanding as to call for a large tome of minute analysis. But there is in it uniformly fine craftsmanship, varied interest and a sufficient amount of superlatively great music to justify a much fuller survey than the scope of an article permits. We can, moreover, consider these compositions in some detail as a cross-section of Mozart's creative life. We may regard the keyboard as a prism, in which external circumstances concentrated the light of his emotional development and of his maturing technical mastery, splitting it up, as it were, into his ever-widening conception of the various musical forms.

There are few composers whose youthful works have been the subject of a more minute study than Mozart's received from Wyzewa and Saint-Foix. In their monumental volume "L'Enfant Prodige" they spare no pains to inform the reader of every possible musical contact which the boy Wolfgang might have made, both in his birthplace and on his travels, and to offer overwhelming proof of his unique genius. Yet, invaluable as their research on these early years has been, it amounts to little more than this—that the child was gifted with an amazing ability to grasp the rudiments of musical forms and theory, and, after studying as his models the compositions of his older

contemporaries, to absorb anything which attracted him in their music and to reproduce its style and spirit as part of his own. And these French scholars would have us believe that when Mozart wrote several bars almost identical with, say, something by Schobert, he was doing so consciously and deliberately. They make this point time and again throughout their commentary, and even when describing his later works impute to him lack of originality.¹ It is no disrespect to their great book to suggest that this attitude, if not wrong, is at least a misunderstanding both of child psychology and of the workings of Mozart's mind when matured. Even when very young he was plainly gifted with a phenomenal memory, and early began to develop those associative qualities of mind which later came out so strongly. Now a child does not set out to imitate consciously and exactly anything he has found attractive; to make, as part of his play, copies and adaptations of what he has heard is a far more natural process. To Wolfgang music was play, a joyful creative function, and this was the basis of his approach for the greater part of his life. We may fairly say that these early works are of value and interest solely as the production of a remarkable child. Musically most of them are as empty as the great majority of the sonatas of Rutini, Eckard, Honnauer, Wagenseil and the others on which they were modelled. Very little of the keyboard music of these and other once famous composers is now easily accessible in print except in the few libraries which possess the rare early editions. This makes it difficult to show, without pages of musical illustration, how Mozart profited by his contact with them and assimilated the various styles of composition, French, Italian, and so on. But with few exceptions there is little to distinguish what Mozart wrote in his childhood from hundreds of other eighteenth century compositions which the cumulative judgment of the last two hundred years has relegated to oblivion. If he had been carried off in infancy by one of his severe illnesses we should regard his music written up till then simply as a curiosity. Had Tasso died before he wrote "Rinaldo" or Keats before he began "I stood tip-toe upon a little hill", the artless effusions of their early 'teens would be intrinsically as unimportant as most of these juvenile works by Mozart. Their real interest lies in the occasional foreshadowing of the lines on which his genius was to develop, and in the moments where the child departed from trivial formalism and gave expression to sincere if immature emotion.

Among a number of minuets and other pieces an unfinished Andante in B flat major is outstanding. It was composed during his eighth year, and in it he uttered his first cry in the vein of passionate melancholy which later became so intensely personal to him. The whole piece is remarkable for the fluent power and certainty of its modulation and progression, but specially fine are these bars just before the end (Example 1). Can we persuade ourselves that his father's promptings and corrections could have inspired the child to this? I do not think it is fanciful to see in this work the first budding of the plant which blooms to such poignant perfection in the masterly B minor

¹ They allege that the end of the Fantasia in C minor (K475) is a reminiscence of part of a sonata in the same key by Schobert.

Adagio of 1788. In this little Andante² Mozart creates something which the average music-maker of his day would not create, something which throws us off our rational balance, and by its striking originality makes direct appeal to our intuitive perception. This, the seventh in the list of his works, as now



arranged by Einstein, is emotionally much in advance of all his piano compositions for at least ten years, though technically he continued to make great strides. But before we can consider his sonatas and variations there are a few things which call for our attention in the collection of 43 pieces already mentioned. He began to write these down in a notebook to amuse himself when his father fell ill in London, through having caught what he described as "a kind of native complaint which is called a 'cold' " and which developed into a bad quinsy. These pieces are in two groups, the first written between April and December, 1764, and the second between January and July, 1765.

The family having moved from St. Martin's Lane to Chelsea (then, of course, in the country) because of Leopold's illness, the boy had no piano at any rate for the first group, nor was the paternal eye on the look-out for blemishes. Relying only on his inner ear, Wolfgang perpetrated quite a lot of false relations and mistakes in harmony (though his instinct for modulation was less faulty), and he also showed in several places a blurred sense of tonality. This is the negative value of the notebook, providing confirmatory evidence that his powers, though phenomenal, were not truly creative. On the other hand, these pages prove that his grasp of form was on the whole surer in quick tempo than in slow. A miniature sonata movement in G minor (no. 15) is most attractive and full of confidence, and plainly should be taken at least *allegretto*. Most interesting are the indications of tonal usage and the appearances of melodies and phrases which had already become part of his associative technique, and of which he was to make elaborate use in the future. Thus in no. 15 we meet for the first time G minor, one of his most evocative keys, and the music is tinged with not a little of its later fire and passion. It also contains some bars which anticipate the form and mood of a passage in the much later Sonata in A minor. The melody of no. 31 in A flat major is that of "Das Veilchen" of 1785 and the later andante of the String Quartet in D major (K575). This little gem has something of the reflective warmth and

² This Andante has not been published in the Gesamtausgabe, but is printed in "L'Enfant Prodige" and in W. J. Turner's *Mozart. The Man and his Works*. Assuming that the reader has a copy of the two-hand sonatas, I have confined the musical examples to the less familiar works. Two most useful collections of these are Vol. II of Pauer's edition of Mozart's Complete Piano Works (Augener), which contains all the variations, duet-sonatas, rondos, fantasias and the suite in the style of Handel, the B minor Adagio, the Minuet in D major, and the Fugue in G minor; and a volume issued by the Associated Boards, edited by York Bowen, which contains the two fugues K153, 154, the sonata movements K312, 400, and other early works, besides the best of the rondos and fantasias.

tenderness of all his music in this comparatively infrequent key. No. 7 is formed entirely of some astonishing chords, all of seven or more notes, breves or minims, the like of which only recurs in 1790 and 1791. In no. 12 we see for the first time that favourite progression, peculiar to himself, consisting of four descending notes, the first dotted, on which he builds so many lovely themes. Most notable too is his association of the key of D minor in no. 20 with the rare *siciliano* rhythm, thus anticipating their union in the finale of the String Quartet K421 and in the last variation of the Violin Sonata in F major (K377). These little pieces, for all their errors and gropings, are not devoid of a certain naïve charm, and, above all, they show us, through their uncensored spontaneity, some of the threads which were to run through the whole of Mozart's life and develop with such marvellously natural continuity.

The two sets of variations, K24 and 25, are not of much importance musically (Leopold himself described them as trifles), except as showing how readily Mozart had grasped the principles of contrast in time and rhythm so essential to successful writing in this form.³ The slow variation in each set makes a conscious attempt at a dignified point of rest before the rush of the conclusion. The most effective is the fifth of K24, an elegant little piece in a rocking semiquaver rhythm, which has a distinctly Handelian flavour. K25 is, however, better as a whole, although Leopold tells us it was dashed off in a hurry. Its theme was the old national tune "Wilhelmus van Nassowe", which was in great vogue during the Mozarts' stay in Holland when Prince William V of Orange was being installed. These were not Mozart's first essay in variation form, for the finales of the violin sonatas K11 and 12 consist of variations arranged in a kind of rondo structure, and he was shortly to finish another, K31, in the same way.⁴ We may note that he did not introduce a minor variation, although, as Wyzewa and Saint-Foix point out, Honnauer at least among his models had done so. Nor did Mozart use one in the next two sets of variations which came nearly seven years later. But before we can consider them some duet-sonatas call for our attention.

The origins of music written for four hands at one keyboard are rather obscure. It is probable that much more has been written than survives in print. The earliest known work is, according to Scholes' *Companion*, a piece by Nicholas Carlton (early sixteenth century) entitled "A Verse for Two to play on one Virginal or Organ".⁵ Scholes is, however, wrong in stating the earliest printed duet music to be Burney's sonatas of 1777. J. C. Bach published in 1775 as his opus 15 some four-hand sonatas, and earlier still we have a sonata composed by Mozart in 1765 which has been accepted as genuine by Saint-Foix, and by Einstein, who has numbered it K19d. This is known only in one printed copy which exists in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris,

³ A Breitkopf catalogue mentions an earlier set of variations that has unfortunately been lost.

⁴ K31 shows greater technical dexterity than any of the others, and includes Mozart's first attempt at sustained syncopation. But these and the other early violin sonatas do not strictly concern us here, since, although the accompaniments for violin (or flute) and 'cello are technically obbligato, the piano part is written with an eye to the extra effect of imitation and the fuller harmonies from the strings, so that these cannot really rank as solo keyboard works. Leopold refers to them as trios.

⁵ B.M. Add. MS. 29996, which also contains a Fancy for four hands by Thomas Tompkins.

and it has not been re-published, except by Ganzer and Küscher in their "Vierhändig" (1936). This was not the only duet-sonata composed by Mozart in London, for his sister, when writing to Breitkopf and Härtel in 1800, mentioned the autographs of others of the same date, then in her possession but now lost. Mozart probably wrote K19d for himself and his sister to perform at the exhibitions which they used to give of playing at the same keyboard. In spite of a hint by Wyzewa and Saint-Foix that Mozart may have known a four-hand sonata by Jommelli now in the Brussels Conservatoire (Wotquenne, Vol. II, MS. 6094, no date), it is more than likely that the child's models were the compositions of J. C. Bach, which almost certainly existed in manuscript.⁶ There is no record of his having met such sonatas in Paris. This duet-sonata, in C major throughout, except for the trio which is in F, is beautifully concise and limpid, and seems to strike a note of more genuine inspiration than the violin sonatas written about the same time. The interest is evenly and fluently distributed between the two players, the modulations are well timed and work in neatly with echo effects. But the minuet and trio are decidedly the best of the movements, containing the fewest bars where one player is silent and the most where the second hand is used for adding some contrapuntal as well as some harmonic interest. The sonata is chiefly noteworthy as a technical *tour-de-force*, but in the finale there is an imaginative effort at contrast in the shape of a 19-bar adagio episode where the parts move in contrary motion just before the vigorous conclusion. Einstein points out that the opening theme of this movement bears a remarkable resemblance to that of the Serenade for thirteen wind instruments of 1781.

Thus it is, on the whole, disappointing to find that when Mozart returned to this form in 1772 he produced music which failed to do justice to the wide experience he had had in the interval, through composing symphonies, operas and church music. The origin of the Duet-Sonata in D major (K381) is unknown, but since the MS. was for long in the possession of Mozart's sister, and since Burney heard them play together in 1772, we may infer that this sonata, too, was written for their own performances. There are more passages in it for each player alone than in K19d, and the themes are, on the whole, less interesting and less gracefully handled. But we do find an example, perhaps the first and certainly one of the earliest, of a favourite device of Mozart's—the use of a portion of the main theme to form a strongly modulating section leading to the recapitulation. This phrase from the first bar, in itself



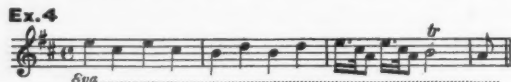
insignificant (Example 2), is turned into something which really does arrest

⁶ The British Museum also possesses the following MSS.: "Duetto à quatre mains" in A major, op. 18, by J. C. Bach (Add. 31680); "Divertimento a 4 mani" (Add. 32043) and an "Andante con moto" entitled "Das Dreyblatt für's Fortepiano und Sechs Hände" (I), both by W. F. E. Bach. There are also seven more duet sonatas by J. C. Bach in the Brussels Conservatoire (Wotquenne, Vol. II, 5907, 5908), for which no date is given, and some by Carl Stamitz. It is curious that Wotquenne, in his comprehensive thematic catalogue of C. P. E. Bach's music, does not record any trace of piano duets.

our attention⁷ (Example 3). We may also note this little tune which recurs



as part of the lilting smoothness of "Voi che sapete" (Example 4). Together



with this sonata of 1772 we may conveniently group that of 1774 (K358) in B flat major. In this there is more display of contrapuntal skill, and the first and second movements are each distinguished by a short but effective coda. The second movement is of a truly Mozartian grace and tenderness, but the finale is mere noise and glitter. However, both these sonatas were to be of use later when Mozart was striving to make his name in Paris in 1778, and K358 again in 1781, when he was becoming known as a virtuoso in Vienna. The latter is mentioned seven times in correspondence between himself and his father.

Before Mozart composed his first set of two-hand piano sonatas he wrote two more sets of variations, those on "Mio caro Adone" (K180) from Salieri's opera *La Fiera di Venezia*, and those on a then famous minuet by J. C. Fischer, a noted oboist (K179). K180 is the earlier by at least a year, and is a most attractive work, for all the variations are in free style, each a meditation, as it were, on the spirit as well as the letter of the tune, and the whole forms a series of delicate and clearly etched mood-pictures. In the style of this work, which conformed to current Viennese taste, Wyzewa and Saint-Foix discern the influence of Haydn, with whose eighteen variations on an Arietta in A major Mozart was probably acquainted. K180 appears to have been popular, for on December 10th, 1778, Leopold wrote to his son that more copies of it would be sold if it were not so well known.⁸ K179 was apparently even more popular, being mentioned in the letters fifteen times—more often than any other piano piece—and its brilliance made it a favourite for displaying Mozart's skill as a pianist. He also selected six of the easier variations for the son of the Elector of Mannheim to use as material for practice. But the musical value of the whole set is small. The bare bones of the minuet can be clearly discerned under the clustering ornaments and figuration, and there is little charm or subtlety in the ideas, nothing, in fact, to match the quiet humour of the allegretto ending to the Salieri set which Abert has aptly described as being in the style of an aria from a French comic opera. But these Fischer variations are a good specimen of the showy Italian style of composition, and do at least

⁷ Another good example of this is in the Piano Trio in G major (K496) at the end of bar two, whence the little concluding figure is taken to be developed as a rich transition theme in bars 95-108.

⁸ It was one of Mozart's few compositions to be published in his own lifetime.

illustrate the kind of thing that was taking the fancy of the musical public in the middle '70's of this century.

By the third quarter of the eighteenth century C. P. E. Bach, Haydn and the Mannheim school of composers—such as Cannabich, the Stamitz family and the brothers Richter—had made their several contributions to the establishment of first movement form, whether of sonata, symphony or quartet. The forms of the slow movement and finale had also been evolved on clearly defined but more elastic principles. Already when writing his early quartets and symphonies Mozart had found these precedents all that he required, and naturally suited to his piano sonatas. He added refinements and subtleties both in lay-out and harmony in his effort to achieve a constantly varying but perfectly balanced alternation of homophonic and contrapuntal interest. But he never felt any urge, as did Beethoven, to shatter the existing canons of first movement form in a mighty effort to accommodate vastly enlarged conceptions and a revolution in style. Indeed, we may doubt whether Mozart, even if he had felt any such explosive urge, would have entrusted its expression to the piano, by itself, for as such it was hardly his favourite medium. It is perhaps surprising that he wrote such good music for it as he did, considering that he said to his father on February 7th, 1778, "I would rather neglect the piano than composition, for with me the piano is only a sideline, though, thank God, a very good one."⁹ He is referring here especially to the drudgery of giving lessons, from which the labour of composition and the rather more pleasurable one of performance in public were to some extent inseparable.

The year 1774 saw the completion of Mozart's change from the so-called "grand" to the "gallant" style. The former is typified by works of a strange and intensely personal emotion, such as the six String Quartets K168-173, and the Symphonies in E flat major and G minor K184, 183. This he now abandoned and devoted himself with few exceptions to the style of writing which is connoted by the untranslatable "*la galanterie*". Solidity and depth were sacrificed to brilliance and courtliness. The six piano sonatas K279-284, written for use on his visit to Munich, are fairly representative of this change. Many writers on Mozart have followed Jahn in describing this group as the sonatas composed for Baron Dürnitz, whereas, in fact, only the last was so composed. The first of them was a little earlier than the next four, but not later than October, 1774. Wyzewa and Saint-Foix maintain that in K279, which is in C major, Mozart has deliberately copied many tricks of style and turns of phrase from some sonatas by two obscure composers, Steffan and Rutini. Certainly its merits are slight, as also, except for two movements, are those of the remainder, whether or not the influence of Haydn is writ large upon them. The Adagio in F minor of K280 is one of the most moving and original things which Mozart ever wrote. With its constantly shifting and beautifully graded modulations in the bass and the finely spaced lament of the melody in the treble, it is near in spirit to the slow movements of some of the

⁹ This and subsequent quotations from the letters are taken, by kind permission of Messrs. Macmillan & Co., from Miss Emily Anderson's translation of "The Letters of Mozart and his Family".

piano concertos, and its pale chromaticism anticipates the Rondo in A minor. (Wyzewa and Saint-Foix believe it to be deliberately modelled on the corresponding movement in Haydn's Sonata in F major (1773, Augener, no. 13), but the resemblance is really only superficial.) Outstanding, too, is the rich and dignified opening Adagio of the Sonata in E flat major (K282). This slow introduction is a reversion to the type of some of the early violin sonatas of 1766, and is also found in the doubtful sonatas of 1772 (K55-60). These thirty-six bars are marked by a warmth of feeling and a sincerity rare at this time.¹⁰ It is not too much to say that in these two movements and one other we hear the first notes of truly Mozartian writing to greet our ears in his piano music since the Andante in B flat major of 1764. The other movement is an Allegro in G minor (K312), all that Mozart completed of a sonata destined to form one of this first set. Most probably he did not finish it because its vehement and fiery temper would have been ill suited to its fellows, and the whole unlikely as an exhibition piece to attract polite and conventionally minded audiences. Its brusque opening theme¹¹ is highly original (Example 5)



and quite different from the prevailing mood of the other five sonatas. Mozart was so concerned to lay emphasis on this theme that he gave it a second exposition in the thirteenth bar, a proceeding for which there are few parallels in his early sonatas, and few in his later ones, though it is not unknown to Haydn. Its development is terse, and there is a typically graceful melody in B flat major, smooth and strongly contrasted with the surrounding agitation. It is strange that Abert and Jahn both omit all mention of this important movement.

The last sonata of this group (K283) was written before the end of 1774. The Sonata in D major (K284) can be assigned with some certainty, from references in Mozart's letters, to not later than March in the next year. I have up till now used "piano" as a convenient generic term for clavichord and harpsichord. We do not always know for which of these instruments specifically he was composing. But probably now and certainly henceforward he intended his works to be played on an instrument in which the strings were struck by a hammer fitted on an escapement principle, and not plucked by a quill as in the harpsichord, or hit by a metal tangent attached directly to the key as in the clavichord. I say "probably", for we do not know exactly when

¹⁰ It is most significant that Mozart, in all his works for solo piano, only chose his usually inspiring key of E flat major for this one sonata, for the short fugue K153 and two sets of variations. The short Andante in this key K236, whatever its date, is trivial. Tovey maintained, in *The Heritage of Music* (Vol. II, p. 94), that it is a transcription of "Non vi turbate" in Gluck's *Alceste*. The melodies are almost identical. In this connection it is worth noting that Wyzewa and Saint-Foix point out the identity of an aria in Gluck's *Paride ed Elena* with a melody in the seventh movement of Mozart's Divertimento in B flat major, K187. Of the preceding sonata (K281 in B flat major) Einstein remarks that here for the first time in an autograph Mozart used elaborate indications of dynamic stresses, especially in the "Andante amoroso".

¹¹ It recurs in the trio (which is also in G minor) of the string quartet in G major (K387).

Mozart first met and appreciated the virtues of the piano, as we may now more correctly call it. Abert conjectures that this Sonata in D major is the first to exploit the new instrument, but apart from the style of the music there is no certain evidence for this.¹² Admittedly the work is spacious and sonorous, and it is possible that Baron Dürnitz, for whom it was composed,¹³ possessed a piano, or Mozart may have come across the *hammerclavier* elsewhere sometime before he first mentioned it in his letters.

Wyzewa and Saint-Foix discern in this sonata the final stage in Mozart's conversion to *la galanterie*. They display some concern at not being able to find any model, apart from the French school in general, from which the unusual nature of its three movements might be derived. But is it not possible that the sequence of Allegro, Rondeau en Polonaise, Theme and variations might be ascribed to the force of Mozart's own genius? The Allegro is not much longer than those of the earlier sonatas, but its brilliance conceals a strength and an artistic consciousness which they lack. The second melodic group is in Mozart's lyrical A major vein, and is most beautifully poised. Both this and the opening group are much longer than their predecessors. The movement as a whole has something of the air of a concerto. The following Rondeau is on a big scale too, with unexpected turns of phrase, refreshing modulations in the Alberti bass and a clever shifting of the rhythms. As befits the theme, the variations are finer and more spacious than any hitherto. For the first time one of them is in the minor, and is a really passionate interlude. In nos. 7 and 8 we feel a foreshadowing of Beethoven in the vigour of the counterpoint, particularly when it moves in octaves. (It is interesting to compare the second variation in his sonata, op. 109.) Over all there reigns an air of strength blended with sprightliness, indicating that this finale is not just a mere vehicle of display, but conveys a heightening of mood worthy of a sonata conceived as a dramatic whole.

Two years later, in 1777, Mozart was at Augsburg. There he met Stein, the famous instrument maker, and of his pianos he wrote as follows, making clear their superiority over the jangle of the harpsichord, with its lack of graded volume, and over the exiguous tinkle of the clavichord, for which there was scarcely compensation in such sustaining power as it had:—

"Before I had seen any of his make, Späth's claviers had always been my favourites. But now I much prefer Stein's, for they damp ever so much better than the Regensburg instruments. When I strike hard I can keep my finger on the note or raise it, but the sound ceases the moment I have produced it. In whatever way I touch the keys the tone is always even. It never jars, is never stronger, weaker or entirely absent. . . . His instruments have this advantage over others, that they are made with escape action. Only one maker in a hundred bothers about this. But without an escapement it is impossible to avoid jangling and vibration after the note is struck. When you

¹² The whole question of the instruments for which Mozart wrote is very difficult, and is fully discussed, in relation to all his early keyboard works, by Nathan Broder in an article "Mozart and the 'Clavier'" in *Musical Quarterly* for October, 1942.

¹³ For this nobleman of Munich, who was a devotee of the bassoon, Mozart composed the quaint dry sonata for that instrument and the 'cello, and three concertos for it as well, of which only the delightful one in B flat major has come down to us. He was never paid for these or the piano sonata.

touch the keys the hammers fall back again the moment after they have struck the strings, whether you hold down the keys or release them. . . . Here and at Munich I have played all my six sonatas by heart several times. . . . The last one in D [*i.e.* K284] sounds exquisite on Stein's pianoforte.¹⁴ The device, too, which you work with your knees [*i.e.* the sustaining pedal] is much better on his than on other instruments; I have only to touch it and it works; and when you shift your knee the slightest bit you do not hear the least reverberation."

The next two sonatas, K309 in C major and K311 in D major, both date from his stay in Mannheim at the end of 1777. They undoubtedly reflect the inspiration of Stein's craftsmanship and the effect of the stimulus which Mozart's mind had received from the executive brilliance of the orchestra at Mannheim. The scale of the music is enlarged, for the bigger and more flexible tone of the new piano invited swifter contrasts, and he made full use of the sustaining powers of the efficient pedal. Emotionally, however, these sonatas are rather disappointing. They lack the sincerity of purpose of K284; only the tenderness of the andante of that in C major is truly outstanding, and there is little doubt that we owe its romantic sighing to the interest Mozart felt in Rose Cannabich, the daughter of the then eminent composer and conductor of the brilliant orchestra. Writing to his father, Mozart described the movement thus: "It is full of expression and must be played accurately and with the exact shades of *forte* and *piano*, precisely as they are marked." Bars 33-43 especially, with the fine threads of counterpoint at the end, enshrine the best in his music of these years. The most successful part of the Sonata in D major is undoubtedly the finale, one of the first and most convincing in 6/8 time. In this measure Mozart was sometimes not wholly at ease, but here the music is confident and not without a certain whimsical humour. As in the first movement there is a graceful second theme in A major.

In neither of these sonatas, however, is there any hint of the magnificence which was to come when Mozart reached Paris, and composed his masterpiece in A minor. The first movement is in a mood of passionate and rebellious striving most rare with him at this or, indeed, at any time. But it is highly concentrated and every note matters, for he eschewed empty passage work and left no loose ends. More than ever before the lay-out is plainly inspired by orchestral technique, and the frequent prominence of the melody in the left hand is remarkable and almost unprecedented. The andante is uncommonly solemn, but dramatic as well. The passing of the triplets (bars 37 foll.) from the bass to the treble over the menacing trills which are given in "surgy murmurs" to the left hand is very fine. Here for the first time Mozart sets up arches of scale passages and trills as a massive frame for the conclusion. There is nothing in all his music quite like the powerful rush of the Presto, without a semiquaver anywhere. The theme is of unusually small compass. It twists impetuously, and its presentation in octaves in the bass is a magnificent feature of this movement—the first of a small number of completely successful

¹⁴ This rather looks as if K284 was not composed for the new type of instrument. As late as October 14th, 1777, Mozart wrote from Mannheim to say that he was playing on a good clavichord by Stein, but this cannot be held to prove anything either way.

finales to big works in a tragic vein.¹⁵ Wyzewa and Saint-Foix would ascribe Mozart's inspiration to Schobert or Hüllmandel, who had both written sonatas in A minor at this time. Comparison of the scores shows that he has outsoared his models (if such they were), and we can find closer parallels in his own music—in the equally intense but more sombre anguish of the magnificent E minor Violin Sonata, which dates from the same months, and even surpasses the piano sonata in terseness and dynamic breadth.

Before he left Paris in the autumn Mozart had written four more piano sonatas, K330–333.¹⁶ On the whole they show little advance on that in A minor, but there are some very good movements. K330 in C major contains one masterstroke, the formation of a brief coda to the exquisite Andante from a theme in the section in F minor which is put into F major at the end. The rest of the sonata is undistinguished. The excellence of the variations forming the first movement of K331 in A major is too well known to need comment. The following minuet is of unusual length and power, but leaves an impression of restlessness. The "Turkish" Rondo is a brilliant and highly original piece of music, but has become hackneyed through excessive performance and arrangement. Despite its sparkling rhythm it does not really form a satisfactory ending to a work which resembles a suite more than a sonata. K332 in F major is much better balanced. The bold changes of key and subtle rhythms in the first movement have a perennial freshness, and in the quiet intimate Adagio Mozart sustains the interest by incessant modulations away from the tonic of B flat major into more melancholy keys. In the Allegro Assai, which, most unusually, is in full sonata form, the spirit of Domenico Scarlatti seems to live again, although Mozart does not appear to have come into direct contact with his music. This finale has a wonderful reserve of power as it dips and soars with all the swiftness and beauty of a swallow's flight. The whole is one of Mozart's purest and most poetical inspirations, but especially lovely are the F minor episode (bars 184 foll.) and the peace of the ending. After this, the ideas in the first movement of K333 seem cramped and conventional, for all the elegance of the music. But of its Adagio in E flat major it is sufficient to say that the richness of its harmony and its dignity make it worthy of Mozart's finest creations in this key. The harshness of the modulations after the double bar, with the reiterated F's in the bass rising chromatically to B flat, must have sounded strange to contemporary ears. But there is little homogeneity in this sonata. The elaborate Rondo which forms the finale is quite different in style and spirit from the rest. It includes a passionate cadenza, and is more like a movement from one of the serenades of this period, such as those in D major (K320 and 334). Comparison with the solo writing in the concerto for two pianos which dates from these months is also instructive. The orchestra has plainly evoked a depth of poetic imagination which is for the most part lacking in this Rondo. But it is a fluent piece of music, most delightful to play, and has an unfailing piquancy in the varied quality of the

¹⁵ Others are those of the quartet in D minor and the piano concertos in D minor and C minor.

¹⁶ Wyzewa and Saint-Foix believe, mainly on stylistic grounds, that the last dates from early in 1779 after his return to Salzburg; Einstein assigns it to Paris.

episodes leading to the return of the main theme. Most pleasing is the effect of an athematic tune in G minor (bar 64 foll.) which is introduced for the sake of contrast, with much of the usual pathos of that key. The movement as a whole gives the impression of having been written with the figure of C. P. E. Bach in the background. The importance of his influence on Mozart should never be underestimated, whether or not we accept without qualification the statement of Rochlitz (not always a trustworthy source of tradition) that in 1789 Mozart made the oft-quoted remark: "He is the father, we are the children. Anyone of us who knows anything good has learned it from him." In any case there is no doubt that in the early 1780's both C. P. E. Bach and his father were among the influences bringing about a marked if temporary change in Mozart's style and thought.

Before this took place, however, he had composed four more sets of variations, K264, 265, 353, 354. They have nothing of the poetic quality of those in the A major sonata, and show advance on the last separate set (those on Fischer's minuet) only in the quality of the minor variations, each of which, though short, has a pronounced intensity of feeling almost incongruous with the superficiality of the others. In those two in the very rare key of E flat minor (in K353, 354), the texture is emphatically contrapuntal and all insistence on the melodic line vanishes. (This anticipates Mozart's practice in the many fine variations which he introduced into his later instrumental masterpieces, the minor section in the finale of the G major Piano Concerto, for example.) Of the other two, both in C minor, that in K265 is mournful and written in imitation—a curious change from the spirit of the tune "Ah, vous dirai-je, Maman", while that in K264, with its elaborate syncopations and broken arpeggios, bears a strong resemblance to the trio (which is also in C minor) of the String Quartet in C major. But even with these pieces, Mozart has travelled a long way from his various "models" in his conception of the musical value of variations as distinct from their use for the display of virtuosity. It is unfortunate that we do not possess (if, indeed, they were ever written down) the variations which, in November, 1781, Mozart told his father he intended to compose on Russian popular songs while the Grand Duke Paul Petrovitch of Russia was in Vienna. Thirty years later, however, the name of Mozart did come to be associated with Russian airs, for Wolfgang Amadeus the younger composed two sets of variations on them.

Here we may mention a most interesting sonata movement in B flat major (K400) of a slightly later date. It is fresh and unconventional, with an opening in leaping broken arpeggios which are more like Haydn than Mozart. Its second melody is cleverly disguised by a repetition of the opening bars leading to a loud chord on the seventh followed by the appearance of the real theme. After the double bar the opening is repeated and modulates to a startling chord in D major. Then comes this charming if rather untypical melody in G minor (Example 6). Mozart did not finish the movement, but left all the material necessary for Abbé Stadler to do so. It can be assigned with certainty to the summer of 1781, for in the middle of the autograph the names "Sophie" and "Costanza" occur, indicating that Mozart was deliberating

on the charms of the two Weber sisters, of whom he ultimately married Constanze. The names are written over musically contrasted phrases (quoted in Jahn, vol. II, p. 251, 1891 translation), a truly delicate way of bringing out the difference in the character of the ladies.



When he finally broke away from Salzburg and went to Vienna he must have known that for his living he would have to rely largely on his powers as a pianist and on his patience and skill as a teacher. Indeed, in June, 1781, he wrote to his father: "Vienna is certainly the land of the piano." Naturally he could not foresee the influence which at the same time was to guide much of his creative work into practically unexplored paths. In 1778 Baron Gottfried van Swieten had returned to Vienna from the post of Imperial Ambassador at the Court of Berlin. This nobleman was a musical enthusiast, and while in Berlin had been strongly attracted by the works of J. S. Bach, Handel and other North German masters for whom the Berliners had never lost their taste in favour of the more fashionable French and Italian styles. In 1774 he had commissioned C. P. E. Bach to write some symphonies, which shows that he was not out of touch with current fashions. But on his return to Vienna he brought with him copies of many works in the older style, and soon gathered round him a circle for study and performance. In it was Mozart, who appears to have met van Swieten first in the spring of 1781, and thus had a new world opened to him. It is true that as a child he had received instruction from his father based on a manuscript collection of gigue, minuets, polonaises, etc.,¹⁷ chosen from Telemann, Hasse and C. P. E. Bach, among many others. He had adapted a sonata from the last-named to form part of an early piano concerto (K40), and had also had some lessons in counterpoint from the eminent teacher Martini in 1770, but till 1781 he had never come in contact with the music of these and greater North Germans as a living art form. Now did he not gain an additional spur to his own enthusiasm from the veritable passion which his wife Constanze had for fugues? Of this he wrote in April, 1782:—

"Baron van Swieten gave me all the works of Handel, and Sebastian Bach to take home with me. When Constanze heard the fugues she absolutely fell in love with them. Now she will listen to nothing but fugues, and particularly the works of Handel and Bach. Well, as she had often heard me play fugues out of my head, she asked me if I had written any down, and when I said I had not, she scolded me roundly for not recording some of my compositions in this most artistic and beautiful of all musical forms, and never ceased to entreat me till I had written down a fugue for her."

So now the spirit of the early eighteenth century found vigorous reincarnation in Mozart's music of this period, which includes some of his most original works.

¹⁷ There was no sonata in this collection—only a sonatina by Kirchoff—though Leopold himself had written various sonatas at this time.

We have only to think of the finale of the String Quartet in G major, of the intricate yet unlaboured canons in the trio of the Serenade in C minor, of the noble fugal architecture of much of the C minor Mass and of the first movement of the *Haffner* Symphony to realize how valuably the style of Bach and Handel had enriched Mozart's mature genius. His regular Sunday attendances at van Swieten's had borne excellent fruit.

Naturally music in this rather severe style without relief would not be suited to public performance, especially on the piano with its limited tone-colour, though it could be woven judiciously into the texture of a sonata. Such a work is the Sonata for two pianos in D major of November, 1781, a little earlier than the full tide of archaistic influence. This medium lends itself specially to contrapuntal writing, but the discreet use Mozart makes of it does not clash with the poetical brilliance and antiphonal refinements of this deservedly popular sonata, which he wrote for playing himself with a lady pupil, and which he was to use again in 1784. There is a noteworthy fragment of another Sonata for two pianos in B flat major (K Anh. 42).¹⁸ Einstein places it with the Sonata in D major, but from the massive sonority and complex modulations of the slow introduction (highly reminiscent of the style of the great Duet-Sonata in F major) there is much to be said for the suggestion of Wyzewa and Saint-Foix that it belongs to about the year 1785. To play this fragment over is to be convinced that its non-completion has deprived us of a very great piece of music. Here is its beginning (Example 7). There is, however, no doubt about the date of another fragment for two pianos, a theme for variations (K Anh. 43), which from its curious superscription "*Per la Signa [sic] Constanza Weber—ah!*" cannot be later than the autumn of 1782. Another fragment, of a Fugue for two pianos in G major (K Anh. 45), is further evidence of Mozart's pre-occupation with this fascinating medium at this time.

The older style in its full glory found much freer expression in piano works written for private performance. But when we consider the fugues and fantasias which Mozart wrote under these North German influences we cannot help remarking on their fragmentary state. In a period of little more than a year and a half he began nearly a score of them and only finished four. It was, of course, a time full of distractions, chief among them the adventure of matrimony and the gradual realization that his wife would never prove wholly acceptable to his father and sister. At the same time, during which he had to give lessons and concerts in the continual effort to secure his position in Vienna, he was studying Haydn's "Russian" quartets and developing his mastery of the piano concerto. Thus of the series of six fugues which Mozart intended to write for van Swieten only one (K394) was finished. The impressive fragments K Anh. 39 and 40 are the residue of this attempt. There is a very fine fugue in G minor (K401), of which Stadler completed the last eight bars. Without being unduly harsh, its harmonies are astringent and exhilarating, and the movement of the parts is never obscured. There is another slightly pompous one in E flat major (K153) and a much better one in G minor (K154).

¹⁸ It has been published in both the Gesamtausgabe and in the music supplement to Jahn and to Abert, though no mention of it is made in their text.

Both these were completed by Simon Sechter, a Viennese composer and theorist, who in 1828 numbered Schubert among his pupils, and published the earliest analysis of the finale of the *Jupiter* symphony. The autograph of the latter fugue runs to 30 bars, sombre rather than passionate, and a not unworthy satellite of the great works in this key. Einstein has assigned to these months

Ex. 7 Grave

1st PIANO

2nd PIANO

etc.

an uncompleted Fantasia in F minor, which is unknown to earlier editions of Köchel. The few bars he quotes are sufficient to reveal the same lofty vein which we meet in the fantasias composed in this key in 1791. It is very interesting that at this time Mozart wrote a series of vocal canons, K229-234, 347, 348, some with words in a strain of scatological ribaldry reminiscent of his letters to his cousin "the Bäsle". Perhaps they were a kind of homeopathic relief from his more serious studies in fugue and counterpoint, parallel to the

similar outburst of vocal levity which occurs in the canons K553-562, immediately after the austere polyphony of the *Jupiter* symphony.

The Fantasia and Fugue in C major (K394) is a notable work, of which Mozart told his sister that he composed the fugue first and wrote it down while he was thinking out the prelude. He was most insistent that the fugue should not be played too fast. It was an original touch to begin with a slow introduction in the manner of Haydn instead of plunging into the fantasia straight away. The rolling arpeggios and triplet scales which follow, with their unusual modulations, plainly owe much to the inspiration of C. P. E. Bach. On the other hand, the fugue has not a little in common with some of J. S. Bach's "48", above all in its dignified figuration and bold dissonances. (Mozart was at this time arranging some of the "48" for string trio or quartet, adding new preludes, K404a and 405.) The whole fugue is cast in a lofty mood akin to the "Qui tollis" and the "Cum spiritu sancto" of the C minor Mass. The dignity of its resolution would surely have won the approval of Johann Sebastian himself. The last fifteen bars or so are exceptionally interesting. First the semiquaver part of the subject is presented in thirds in the bass; then comes the final entry culminating in a rich series of sixths in the treble, followed by as extension of that section of the subject which is in falling fifths, here harmonized in clashes of alternating major seconds and ninths. The margins of the autograph are covered with numbers which show that during these hours of musical cerebration Mozart was preoccupied with calculations relative to a lottery! Yet is it so surprising when we remember his juvenile passion for arithmetic, and that when in Milan in 1770 he was much interested in a lottery which was being held there? Did he not also ask his sister—in a letter which he signed "Friend of the Counting House"—to send him tables and exercises in arithmetic?

This work, K394, is much more successful artistically than the "Suite in the style of Handel" (K399) which was composed for van Swieten. The suite comprises an Overture, Allemande, Courante and six bars of a Sarabande. The music is vigorous and full of unusual harmonic effects with fine progressions, but somehow it does not quite carry conviction either as Mozart or Handel. A fusion of styles did not, however, necessarily preclude a successful whole, for the Fantasia in D minor (K397) is a notable work. It opens with a mysterious athenatic prelude in modulating arpeggios, rather in the manner of one of J. S. Bach's big preludes for organ or harpsichord. This gives way to a passionate and melancholy andante rising thus in syncopations (Example 8) to heights of anguish worthy of the D minor Quartet. After a swift



cadenza this is repeated, but leads to a sprightly Allegretto in D major. In the Fantasia in C minor (K396) the influence of C. P. E. Bach is most noticeable.

This composition presents something of a problem, for, although it has been widely accepted and played as a complete work for piano by Mozart, the autograph stops short at bar 28 and for the last five bars includes a violin part. The remainder is in Stadler's hand. Possibly, therefore, it was intended as an introduction to a fantasia-sonata for piano and violin on the lines of that in A major (K402), of which the fugue was also finished by Stadler. On the other hand, it is difficult to credit him with the powerful stormy rush of the sextolets after bar 28, which are of irresistible grandeur, and to modern ears have the ring of the genuine demonic element in Mozart. Conceivably, Stadler had access to some more complete autograph now lost. At any rate, even the first 28 bars are monumental, and emphasize Mozart's debt to the fantasias of C. P. E. Bach. That master, however, was often so preoccupied with the use of ornaments and the exploitation of the new found possibilities of harmony and pianistic effects that he tended to become even more rambling than was necessary in fantasia form. When in a rondo-fantasia, such as that in G major of 1779 (no. 5 of his fifth collection, *Für Kenner und Liebhaber*), he attempted a greater regularity in his material, the result was strained and rather dull. Mozart never fell into such empty virtuosity and never lost his grip on the piece as an artistic unity. Rousseau remarked that a fantasia was a piece of instrumental music which one performed as one composed it, and added, Chesterton-like, that it could never be written, because as soon as it was written or repeated it ceased to be a fantasia and became an ordinary piece. Mozart was the first to invalidate part at least of this statement in these works of 1781 to 1782, which foreshadow the superb Fantasia in C minor of 1786, wherein Rousseau's dogma was finally reconciled with fact.

Another attractive composition in this style is the Capriccio in C major (K395). This has been identified with the *Kleines Præludium* described in a letter of July, 1778, with which Mozart sent the music to his sister. Unfortunately the end of it as he describes it, mentioning the actual notes, does not tally with the version we possess. If, however, the identification be accepted, we have here additional evidence that Mozart appreciated the principles of C. P. E. Bach's music before he got to know it in detail through van Swieten. This Capriccio has most interesting sections of *ad libitum* cadenzas and freely modulating recitative in which bar lines are dispensed with. It ends with a brilliant Allegro assai, and the whole is well worth study by pianists who like Mozart in his unorthodox moods.

He set a triumphal crown on these months of fugal experiment with the Fugue in C minor for two pianos, which takes a high place among his greatest compositions of whatever kind. Abert believes the subject (Example 9) is



borrowed from some ballet music by Joseph Starzer, who was a member of van Swieten's circle and later conducted his revivals of Handel's oratorios, but it may belong to a fairly common type which, as Wyzewa and Saint-Foix

point out, we meet in the "Laudate pueri" of the "Vesperae Solemnnes" (K339), in the "Kyrie" of the Requiem, and also in the finale of Boccherini's quartet, op. 6, no. 6. (The last of these is especially remarkable, being almost a note for note resemblance, but in 6/8 time. This quartet was not published till about 1790.) An outstanding feature of this grim fugue is the manner in which passages of uncompromising harshness give way to moments of deep exultation, as when the subject is presented in inversion. Harmonically, it is the most advanced piece ever written by Mozart in contrapuntal or any other style, and the tension never relaxes. It impressed Beethoven so much that he copied it out complete in score. The complexity of this music makes it better suited for performance on strings, with their more varied voices and greater incisiveness of attack, than for pianos. So Mozart may have thought later, for in 1788 he transcribed it for string quartet, and added a profoundly moving Adagio in the same key (K546).¹⁹ There is also a fragment of a powerful Allegro in C minor for two pianos (K Anh.44) which is included in the music supplement to Jahn and to Abert. Einstein suggests that it was planned as an introduction for the C minor fugue, and it certainly starts on the same lofty plane.

During these years Mozart wrote two sets of variations, each with some points of technical interest. The first (K352) on a march from Grétry's *Mariage des Samnites* dates from June, 1781. The variation in F minor contains all the intensification of style and feeling peculiar to that key, and in bars 5-7 we meet a striking phrase identical with the famous one in the seventh bar of the String Quintet in G minor. From the absence of bravura we may conjecture that this work was written for a pupil. Far different are the variations on "Salve tu domine" from Paisiello's *I Filosofi Immaginari* (K398) which Mozart wrote to play at a concert he gave in March, 1783. The theme is peculiar in having no repeat bar. The second variation is airy and powerful, somewhat in the manner of an early Beethoven scherzo, and the fourth, fifth and sixth are unique in that each contains an elaborate cadenza.²⁰ In the fifth, one hand or the other is trilling continuously. The sixth consists of swiftly modulating arpeggios, phrased in semiquaver triplets, which are set in contrary motion, a brilliant piece of passage work, proving that we are in the realm of the great piano concertos.

In the summer of 1784 come two more sets of these popular variations, bearing even more strongly the impress of their environment. These, on "Come un Agnello" from Sarti's *Fra due Litiganti* (K460) and on "Unser dummer Pöbel meint" from Gluck's *Die Pilgrime von Mecca* (K455) mark the highest point reached by this form in Mozart's works for solo piano. They

¹⁹ Possibly he intended at one time to arrange it for a string orchestra, for the autograph contains a few bars of a part for "Bassi". Prince Anton Radziwill, the friend and patron of Beethoven, arranged this fugue for full orchestra (without even mentioning Mozart's name on his score) to form the "entrata" of his *Compositionen zu Goethe's Faust* (composed 1810-30, published 1835), with the C minor Adagio as the introductory largo. I am grateful to Prof. E. J. Dent for telling me of this plagiarism. The fugue, in the two piano form, with the Adagio similarly arranged, has been published by Augener.

²⁰ Abert states that these cadenzas are due to the influence of Clementi, but gives no specific references.

cannot of course compare with the grandeur of the variations in the C minor Piano Concerto or in the Violin Sonata in F major (K377), but they are very fine of their kind. The Sarti set are truly lyrical, as befits their key, A major. Neither here nor in K455 do we meet any clear-cut cadenzas as in the above-mentioned K398. Mozart's method is now more subtle. He introduces sweeping scale passages, abrupt pauses and sequential modulations as an integral part of a variation, for now at last, under the influence of his concertos, he has conceived the set as a musical unity, in which melody, texture, ornament and bravura are interrelated and inseparable. Here the A minor variation in K460 is outstanding. It springs from an adagio in the major, after which Mozart dispenses with the melody in favour of a series of chromatic scales, punctuated by brief allusions, in remote keys, to the rhythm of the theme. (There is a similar scheme in the fine minor variation in the A major Violin Sonata, K305.) The Gluck variations are on a much bigger scale, and are even more brilliant pianistically. Here is the first part of the theme, and its transformation in the minor (Examples 10, 11). In no. 6, a plethora of trills serves

Ex.10 Allegretto



Ex.11



as a background for a kind of chromatic meditation on the first part only of the tune. The whole set is full of resource and fine imagination, and has an air of forthright briskness which makes it a worthy companion to the Piano Concerto in the same key (K453).²¹

The merits of the magnificent Sonata and Fantasia in C minor (K457 and 475) are too well known to need much comment here. It is worth mentioning that the slow movement of the Sonata has been selected for special study by H. Brunner in his *Das Klavierklangideal Mozarts und die Klavier seiner Zeit* (Prague, 1936). The elaborate dynamic markings of this adagio make it well suited for study in relation to the problem of the technical capacity of the instruments of the time, and its richly meditative mood has much in common with the slower parts of the Fantasia. In both Mozart makes special use of arresting modulations to D flat major, one of his most infrequent keys. The Fantasia is undoubtedly a greater work than the Sonata. It has a majestic reserve of power lacking in the latter, and even in its moments of greatest frenzy is free from the rather hysterical note which rises in the tumult of the

²¹ The quality of these variations moved Tchaikovsky to orchestrate them together with three other later pieces (the Minuet in D major, the Little Gigue in G major and the motet "Ave verum corpus") to form the attractive suite *Mozartiana*. The orchestration of the motet was based on a piano transcription of it by Liszt.

Sonata. In it are combined the solemn brooding spirit of the contemporary *Maurerische Trauermusik* (K477), the quintessence of all the earlier fantasias, and the glowing inspiration of the best of the piano concertos. Here, as in some of the cadenzas to those concertos, we get a glimpse of the brilliant and poetical extemporization at the piano for which Mozart was so famous in his lifetime. We may conjecture that the writing of fantasias was generally much more congenial to him than the production of sonatas. Mozart apparently intended this Sonata and Fantasia to be played together, for he had them published under one title-page, bearing a dedication to one of his lady pupils.

Two Rondos, in D major and F major (K485 and 494) are pleasant but relatively insignificant works. They have fluency and charm, but for the most part lack depth of feeling. K485 is more strictly a sonata movement than a rondo, for it has full development and recapitulation.²² The end is most interesting, where the main theme enters after a startling modulation from D major to B flat major, and then after a rhetorical flourish, adds to itself an extra rhythmical tag, and thus expanded, dies away quietly and gracefully. The other Rondo is a true rondo, and a more genial work. It is distinguished by a section of noble counterpoint in F minor, and by an elaborate cadenza written out in full. Here too the ending is quiet, with both hands unusually low down in the bass.

In recent years piano duets have fallen into regrettable disfavour among recitalists. Is it because they are deemed undignified or slightly comic? Whatever the reason, we are deprived of much fine music, particularly by Schubert and Brahms, and not the least to be deplored is the infrequent performance of the mature duets of Mozart. The Sonatas in F major and C major (K497 and 521) are among his very greatest compositions. They are as far removed in power and beauty from the duet sonatas of 1772 as a modern express locomotive is from Stephenson's "Rocket". K497 is the finer, but K521 is not far behind, and the pair almost deserve an article to themselves, as they are on a symphonic scale. The slow introduction to K497 is parallel to the opening structure of the *Linz* symphony and the Piano Fantasia in C minor (K475), and it is interesting to compare all three with the method favoured by Haydn in beginning many of his later symphonies. Here, as in the introduction to Beethoven's Fourth and Seventh Symphonies, dark shadows pass and re-pass majestically before the brilliant light of the allegro breaks in to disperse them. In this F major Sonata²³—and to a lesser degree in its fellow—the technique of the piano concertos is applied for the last time in its full glory to a chamber work, with an enhanced sense of the exalted intimacy peculiar to this type of Mozart's music. And in the luminous fabric of the polyphonic writing we can see many dramatic touches which reflect the

²² The opening melody is "borrowed" from the adjacent Piano Quartet in G minor, third movement, bar 60, etc.

²³ This sonata is one of a number of first-rate works in a major key but with a sombre and sometimes gloomy first movement. Others are the "Sinfonia concertante" for violin and viola, the Serenade in D major (K320) and the Piano Concerto in C major (K467).

mastery of the symphonic ensembles in *Figaro*. Here is one of the most notable melodies (Example 12) treated at length in imitation. (It recurs in



the Glass Harmonica Quintet of 1791.) Tovey has pointed out the melodic and rhythmical identity between the development of the first subject in the allegro (bar 93 foll.) and the chorus "Es lebe Sarastro" in *Die Zauberflöte*.³⁴ The andante is an odd mixture of languorous highly ornamented writing and vigorous imitation, typified by this theme (Example 13) of which Tovey



characteristically remarked, "Four Chinese dragons might achieve its august poise and agility. But it is also human and occidental". These contrasting elements are resolved in the serenity of the coda (Example 14), one of the noblest



Mozart ever wrote. The finale has a ferocious energy, a spate of glorious tunes, and some superb part writing. Mozart gives special prominence to this

³⁴ This allegro shares with the first movements of three other compositions in F major, the Piano Concerto, the Piano Sonata and the Violin Sonata (K459, 533, 377 respectively) the curious distinction of being devoid of semiquavers, save for one or two bars. (Mozart wrote only one other important instrumental work in this key, the String Quartet K590.) No other works with an opening movement in quick tempo have this peculiarity.

ominous figure (Example 15) which is tossed about from one player to the other



like a shuttlecock.²⁵ The Sonata in C major is on a somewhat smaller scale, and despite a mask of geniality it leaves an impression of aloofness. The andante is undoubtedly the movement with the most varied emotion. The second theme (Example 16) is of an unusual shape, and the climax which

Ex. 16

PRIMO

SECONDO

etc.

Mozart builds up on it, as it alternates between bass and treble with ever-changing key, is overwhelming. In the finale he relaxes a little, and is careful to mark the main theme *dolce*²⁶ at each of its cleverly prepared returns. In these two sonatas Mozart climbs to a peak of isolated magnificence. He had nothing to learn from the duets of his contemporaries, and, indeed, in all his piano music from now onwards his art becomes ever more intensely personal, and, until the closing years of the century, is unrivalled.²⁷

We must here consider a Sonata in B flat major which is a most interesting but puzzling piece of music. Originally published in 1798 and again in 1801

²⁵ This striking figure is used, but with a beautifully gentle effect, on the woodwind in the uncompleted "Incarnatus" of the Mass in C minor. It recurs, in duple time, in the fourth of the D minor variations in the F major violin sonata.

²⁶ A rare expression mark in Mozart, but here confirmed by the autograph. The opening of the andante of this sonata is strongly akin to that of the larghetto of the String Quartet in B flat major (K589).

²⁷ A duet-sonata in G major (K357) belonging to this period has two movements almost completed, and as far as they go they are hardly inferior to the other two sonatas. Saint-Foix sees in both K497 and 521 the influence of Clementi, especially in what he describes as Mozart's monothematic tendency. Unfortunately, like Abert (cf. footnote 20), he gives no specific references to substantiate Clementi's influence on Mozart. See also footnote 31.

under Mozart's name, it was claimed in 1806 as the work of August Eberhard Müller, a minor Viennese composer (1767-1817). On this ground, Waldersee put it in the appendix of his second edition of Köchel as no. 136, but Einstein has reinstated it as no. 498a among the genuine works, placing it immediately after the Trio for clarinet, viola and piano. The first allegro is beyond doubt genuine Mozart; the remainder comprises an andante (which is a transcription of the andante of his Piano Concerto in B flat major (K450)) a minuet, and a finale based on material from the finales of two other concertos in that key, K456 and 595. Müller may have been responsible for the arrangements, but he certainly did not compose the fine though unpianistic minuet, which Einstein suggests to be an arrangement of the missing first minuet of *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*. The allegro is highly effective, and plainly a composition of Mozart's maturity, for it falls into line with the style of the great piano concertos. It is a big loose-limbed work, with rugged outlines, and long passages of striding octaves in the bass. (It is difficult to do justice to such an individual piece of music by sporadic quotation. Unfortunately it has been omitted from the Gesamtausgabe, but Saint-Foix included it in his edition of Mozart's piano sonatas, and it has also been issued separately by the Associated Board and by Litolf.) The thematic material, however, is of the simplest. Each of the two chief themes is introduced by a gruppetto, and indeed the frequency of the gruppetti throughout is paralleled only by the first movement of the Trio for clarinet, viola and piano, in which the main theme, based on a gruppetto followed by the descending notes of the common chord, occurs 63 times in 129 bars. Here the turn is used in a beautifully modulating sequence to form the transition to the recapitulation, exactly as in the Piano Trio in G major (K496). (In one place the insistent use of this gruppetto gives rise to a phrase identical with that which opens the fugue subject of the overture to *Die Zauberflöte*.) The second subject is formed of the delicious mediant-subdominant-leading note-tonic cliché which is wrought so cleverly into the fabric of "Non ti fidar" in *Don Giovanni*. The key too is the same. Towards the end of 1786, some of Mozart's music had a tendency towards unity, and the allegro is a good example of it, owing its unity of style largely to intensive use of gruppetti. In his supplement to the third edition of Köchel (in MUSIC REVIEW, vol. 2, no. 3), Einstein has advanced a further opinion as to the date of this movement, and would place it in 1788-89, in the experimental period before the Piano Sonata in D major (K576). Saint-Foix, however, in his fourth volume, adheres to August, 1786, as given by himself and Wyzewa in the appendix to vol. 2 of their joint commentary. In support of this, it is worth remarking that the broad sweeping style of this allegro and the absence of counterpoint are hard to reconcile with that period when Mozart was aiming at an ever increasing degree of concentration.

The source of the themes both of the duet Variations in G major (K501) and of the solo Variations in B flat major (K500) is unknown. The former is a most delightful work of an uncommon type. The theme is plaintive—one would like to think that Mozart had made it up himself—and the first four variations are short, in the manner of his early works in this form, but amazingly

expressive. The fifth is on a big scale and very much in the manner of the duet-sonatas. K500,²⁸ on the other hand, shows no advance on the variations of 1784, although there is a fine section in B flat minor of which the vigorous counterpoint corresponds exactly to that of two other pieces in this rare key, a variation in the Serenade for thirteen wind instruments and one in the String Trio in E flat, and the trio in a Divertimento in B flat major for two clarinets and bassoon (K Anh. 229, no. 3). Both K500 and 501 have something of the dry preoccupied air of the Quartet in D major (K499). But the Rondo in A minor (K511) takes us into another world, the dreamlike poetry of the slow movements of the Piano Concertos in D (K451), G (K453), C (K467) and A major (K488). Its fluid chromaticism echoes part of the lovely andante of the *Prague* Symphony (K504), but the general style and harmony are nearer in spirit to the 1820's than to 1786. The romantic vein of wistful melancholy has no true parallel in Mozart's music. Following on the failure of *Figaro* and the series of piano concertos to establish his position, this Rondo, with the incessant rise and fall of chromatic scales, breathes a spirit of disillusionment, for all its great beauty and technical mastery. It is the utterance of a great man who falters momentarily as he takes stock of his achievement, looking back with sadness and forward with uncertainty, and cries to himself:—

I am a part of all that I have met:
Yet all experience is an arch, where thro'
Gleams that untravelled world whose margin fades
For ever and for ever as I move.

Towards the end of this Rondo the climax occurs in a passage of emphatic counterpoint, all the more noteworthy in a work where harmonic and melodic interest predominate. We may perhaps compare the best of Mozart's music for piano, and this Rondo in particular, to the work of a great draughtsman in whom the expression of feeling for significant form and tone values is restricted by his having only a hard pencil to work with. Everything that can be done with line lies within his power, but as for shading, he does not pretend that his pencil is charcoal or paint, and his art consists more in the limitation of shading than in its over-elaboration. And because of the quietness of this Rondo, we are less sensible here than elsewhere of Mozart's pencil-drawing treatment of the instrument. The hard pencil gives all the necessary shading, and so makes it best suited of all his keyboard works to the *nuances* of tone and volume of which the modern piano is capable.

Two months later, in January, 1788, Mozart began the monumental Sonata in F major (K533). In the allegro, the acid harmonies, the strained progressions and the stern counterpoint all echo the fugues of 1782. Sometimes he strikes the deep note of exultation of the C minor Fugue for two pianos, especially at bar 195 onwards where the two principal themes come together, rising and falling in blurred chromatic echoes, like the rhythm of mountain peaks receding from the view. How outlandish much of it must have sounded to contemporary ears! The andante ranks with the most beautiful of all

²⁸ The first part of the theme of this set of variations is remarkably like the opening of the Organ Sonata in B \flat major (K68) of 1767.

Mozart's slow movements, but its reflective dignity is broken by some passages of forced harshness, as from bars 60 to 72 where there is an extraordinary sequence of minor thirds. Mozart did not even begin the third movement, which is a great pity, for it would have been most interesting to see how he would have relieved or crowned the tension of these two superb pieces.²⁹

The Adagio in B minor (K540) has many points of affinity with a fantasia, including uneasy harmony, the repeated crossing of hands, the generous allotment of melody given to the left hand and the device of a cantabile phrase being made to blossom into all manner of ornament—all characteristic of that style of composition. But there is no change of tempo throughout, and no break, until the end, in the deep pathos, which reflects a noble resignation to long suffering. The structure is simple, built on a single principal theme which is made to recur in remote keys, and to break off in accents of almost unbearable despair. A gentler phase comes with an arpeggio figure rising in the bass through D major to F sharp major, and after another agitated episode in the tonic, the music comes to rest on the magically simple device of the chord of the augmented sixth. From this point of detachment, a short chromatic cadenza leads to a coda in the deep peace and sweetness of B major. This Adagio and the Rondo in A minor are the most intensely personal and moving utterances entrusted by Mozart to the keyboard unaccompanied by any other instruments.

The first few bars of the little Sonata in C major (K545) enjoyed a brief notoriety in 1940 in the form of a popular foxtrot entitled "In an Eighteenth Century Drawing Room". The work, written for teaching purposes, is negligible.

In the last two years of his life, Mozart wrote six piano works, and three for mechanical organ which he plainly conceived in terms of the keyboard. Of the sonatas in B flat major (K570) and D major (K576), the former has the same quality of crystalline purity as the String Quartet (K589) and the later Variations in the same key (K613). In both sonatas as in the "Prussian" quartets and the two last String Quintets, the technical and emotional interest tends to concentrate in the last movement. In K570 the adagio has a beautiful section in C minor, of a strong pathos not often found in Mozart's music of these years. A theme in the finale, just after the double bar, has a marked resemblance to that of the fugue in the overture to *Die Zauberflöte*, with the gruppetto left out. The double counterpoint at the end is most original but typical of Mozart's last period, which may really be said to begin with this sonata. The Sonata in D major has less endearing but more vigorous qualities and its first and last movements are packed with dexterous and purposeful counterpoint.³⁰ Its adagio, in A major, is an exquisitely springlike piece, somewhat in the spirit of the adjacent Clarinet Quintet, but with rather more florid ornamentation.

²⁹ Their style is utterly different from the Rondo in F (K494), yet Mozart himself apparently sanctioned Hoffmeister's publication (c. 1790) of the three movements as one sonata.

³⁰ This sonata is the only one ever completed of the six "easy" sonatas commissioned by the Emperor of Prussia for his daughter Princess Friderike who must have been a competent pianist if she found this work easy. It is Mozart's last complete sonata. Three fragments (K Anh. 29, 30 and 37), all in F major, attest his efforts to write more, whether for this same series is not certain. The opening of K Anh. 29 is identical with that of the String Quartet in F major (K590).

A plaintive episode in F sharp minor, a rare key, is a sure foil to the lyrical sweetness of the rest. The first movement, in common with the earlier Sonatas in D major, K284 and 311, has a melting and graceful theme in A major, the key of the dominant, and here too the contrast is most effective. The finale is distinguished by the wealth of invention woven round the square crisp theme,³¹ particularly the flowing counterpoint of the triplets in the bass. The style, in general, finds a close parallel in the finale of the great String Quintet in E flat major of 1791.

The Gigue in G major (K574) is on the same lines but its *élan* conceals something of an almost diabolical vein. It has the swiftness and airiness of the overture to *Figaro*, but lacks its bubbling geniality. This Gigue was inspired by some music of J. S. Bach to which Engel, the Court organist at Leipzig, had introduced Mozart, who wrote this little masterpiece in Engel's notebook out of gratitude, on the spur of the moment. It is most like the giges in Bach's Partitas in D major and A major, but there is no evidence that Mozart knew this part of the *Clavierübung*. At some time in these last years came another most original composition, the Minuet in D major (K355). It is one of the least dance-like of all Mozart's minuets, being full of the clash of passing notes and mournful chromaticisms, and its mood is one of intense weariness of heart. Einstein has suggested that the Sonata K576 was originally in four movements of which this minuet was one, but dropped out when the sonata came to be first published in 1805. This would certainly account for the non-appearance in Mozart's *Verzeichniss* of this minuet which was published by itself in 1798. But its style and mood are a little hard to reconcile with the rest of the Sonata. Another curious feature of it is that there is no proper trio.

The Variations on the Minuet of Mr. Duport (K573) are not of outstanding importance. The most interesting is no. 6, in D minor. But those on Schikaneder's tune "Ein Weib ist das herrlichste Ding" (K613)—an unconsciously ironical commentary on Constanze—rank with the fine variations of 1784. They have all the limpid fluency of this late period, and contain Mozart's last excursion into F minor, in no. 6, of which the intensity and close texture is a worthy epilogue to the style and key of the great organ works next to be discussed. The treatment of the theme is freer and richer than ever before, but the virtuosity of 1784 is little in evidence. In the first variation Mozart lengthens the sequence of acciaccaturas, taken from the third section of the theme, into quavers, thus creating a fine effect of syncopation as well as semitonal clashes between the treble and the octave chords in the bass. The adagio, no. 7, is a kind of florid meditation, and in this and, especially in no. 8 the bar for bar correspondence of the sections is thrown to the winds, and there are several remarkable passages where creative enthusiasm carries Mozart

³¹ He had previously used it in the finale of the Piano Concerto in E flat major (K449), bars 17-19, etc. It is remarkably like the main theme in the first movement of Clementi's Sonata in A major, op 36, no. 1, and the presto of this has its chief melody much resembling Mozart's Gigue. On p. 416 of their second volume, Wyzewa and Saint-Foix maintain that the monothematic form of Mozart's last years derives largely from Clementi. Saint-Foix fails to substantiate this in his fourth volume, though, of course, the fifth, when issued, may give detailed evidence for this most interesting claim.

far from his formal obligations. Here is the relevant part of the melody (Example 17)

Ex. 17



and this is the height to which the last variation soars (Example 18).

Ex. 18



Yet Parry could write in *Grove's Dictionary*, s.v. Variations, not knowing, it would seem, the best of Mozart's piano variations or the many great ones in his orchestral music:—

He was not naturally a man of deep feeling or intellectuality, and the result is that his variation building is neither impressive nor genuinely interesting.

Mozart's compositions for mechanical organ have a curious origin. There was in Vienna a famous collection of waxworks, casts from the antique and other interesting objects, among them a large mechanical organ. The owner, a certain Count Deym, commissioned Mozart to write a piece for this organ as a special attraction on the occasion when the effigy of a famous soldier of the day, Field-marshal Laudon, was first exhibited in the collection. This piece was the *Fantasia in F minor* (K594), and later Count Deym ordered two more, the *Fantasia K608*, also in F minor, and an *Andante in F major* (K616). The first two are not strictly *Fantasias*. They were so-called by the publishers of the early editions, but they are actually too carefully balanced and too formally organized to merit this term. Mozart entered them both in his *Verzeichniss* simply as pieces for an organ in a clock.³² K594 is in three sections, an *Adagio*

³² K594 was published only in the form of an arrangement, probably by Mozart himself, for piano duet. (Unwarranted neglect has fallen to its lot, as indeed to that of other notable works forming one of a pair, such as the *Piano Quartet in E flat*, the *Serenade*, or *Octet*, in E flat, and the *String Quintet in C major*.) K608, deservedly popularized by Mr. G. D. Cunningham, was likewise arranged for duet by one Johann Mederitsch, in 1799. A letter of Constanze's to Breitkopf makes it clear that this is not the work of Mozart as used to be thought. K608 was arranged also for two hands by Clementi. Both arrangements have been highly praised by Tovey.

in F minor of extraordinary beauty and exalted feeling, but without any clearly emphasized melody, and relying for its cogency on richly harmonized progressions: leading to an allegro in F major, best described as a full sonata movement in the polyphonic style of a Handel organ concerto, with all the surprise and poetic touches of Mozart's piano concertos. To round off the work, the adagio is repeated, but with subtle differences in the harmonization. K608 begins with a few bars of fiery introduction full of gruppetti, which lead to a majestic fugue. This sums up all that Mozart ever learned about the art of writing fugues, but there is none of the strain or harshness of 1782. Here is rather the perfect control and austere dignity of the finale of the *Jupiter* symphony. But there is also a note of triumph which that movement lacks, and a suggestion of pathos too which is only apparent now and again through the effortlessness of the music which belies the marvellous resource of the counterpoint. The middle section which is in A flat major has all the calm amplitude of a deep-flowing river. The currents of its many-voiced song run strongly, but the melody is not without moments of that Mozartian tenderness which is all too rare in these late works. On its return the fugue has an extra counter-subject which enhances its grandeur.³³ By comparison, the Andante in F major is a clear streamlet, with a discursive charm all its own. It is worth playing for its finely graded climaxes and its many unexpected modulations. The balanced unity and high seriousness of the two Fantasias, composed for an instrument which was little more than a popular toy, though an amazingly efficient one, clearly show how successful were Mozart's efforts to satisfy his own ideals and standards even when he composed to order. Of K594 he wrote to his wife:—

I have now made up my mind to compose at once the Adagio for the watchmaker and then slip a few ducats into the hand of my dear little wife. And this I have done; but as it is a kind of composition which I detest, I have unfortunately not been able to finish it. I compose a bit of it every day—but I have to break off now and then as I get bored. And indeed I would give the whole thing up if I had not such an important reason to go on with it. But still I hope I shall be able to force myself gradually to finish it. If it were for a large instrument and the work would sound like an organ piece, then I might get some fun out of it. But as it is the works consist wholly of little pipes, which sound too high-pitched and childish for my taste.

There are few better instances of Mozart's almost cynical detachment from material considerations than the music composed for Count Deym's waxworks. To this predecessor of Madame Tussaud posterity has truly reason to be grateful, for, together with the two last String Quintets and *Die Zauberflöte*, these two Fantasias share in the fullest and most artistic expression of that formal and aesthetic unity towards which Mozart was striving so earnestly in the last years of his life.

The opinions of Mozart's piano music which have been put forward at various periods have differed very much, but have been based, almost without exception, on his two-hand sonatas. Rockstro in 1879 compared them to

³³ If I have succeeded in tempting the reader to a practical acquaintance with these Fantasias, I would mention that neither is easy to play fluently save for first-rate pianists. But for the moderately proficient, the adagio of K594 and the major section of K608 are the most repaying. And of the duet sonatas, the first movement of that in F major offers the fewest pitfalls.

cathedrals. To him Macdowell retorted irritably in 1912 that they were "compositions entirely unworthy of the composer of the *Magic Flute*", and "were written in a flashy style of harpsichord virtuosity such as Liszt never descended to", which is of more value as a revelation of Macdowell's mind than as a judgment of Mozart's works. Even on a wider basis, any estimate, whether comparative or not, is singularly difficult. For, despite some superficial resemblances, this music is radically different from that written by his contemporaries up to 1791. Three only of Mozart's two-hand sonatas equal the best of Haydn's, but they are certainly better than any sonatas of C. P. E. Bach's or any that Clementi wrote before 1791. But Haydn wrote very few mature duets, fantasias or fugues for piano, and Clementi's early duets are poor, nor has he left any rondos or fantasias, the types in which Mozart surpassed the Bach from whom he learned so much. Haydn's best variations, those in F minor, did not come till 1795, and here too the work of Bach and Clementi is unimportant. So we see that Mozart is in a relatively isolated position, for his finest compositions were in forms which did not attract his contemporaries. But it is certain that the best of his sonatas for two and four hands, the best of his fugues, fantasias and other pieces, comprise at least a score of works (apart from outstanding movements such as the F minor adagio of K280), which rank little, if at all, below his acknowledged masterpieces in other types of chamber music. Is it not at least permissible to wonder how Mozart might have further enriched the sum of piano music if he had not considered the instrument just as a "sideline"?

REVIEWERS

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A. C. — ADAM CARSE
E. J. D. — EDWARD J. DENT
H. J. F. — HUBERT J. FOSS
P. K. — PAUL KAHLE
G. N. S. — EDITOR

Guided Listening

BY

R. J. MANNING

IN his article "Music and the Common Man" in the February number of THE MUSIC REVIEW, Mr. Moore Darling has started a hare which I feel impelled to pursue. He says that the foundation of musical appreciation must be laid in the schools and makes the following points:—

- (a) Music must be an integral part of education and not an extra.
- (b) It is more important to teach the majority to listen than to play.
- (c) The status of the music teacher must be altered.

I have been studying this subject of music in schools for some months, and I should like to develop Mr. Darling's three points, and add a few riders of my own.

Parents would be very surprised if a headmaster demanded three or four guineas a term from them for teaching their offspring geography. They would be equally surprised and probably indignant if they were informed that their child would not attend games after he reached the age of fifteen. Very few parents, indeed, on the other hand, cavil at having to pay extra for piano lessons, or see anything anomalous in their children stopping singing entirely when they begin to work for school certificate, a practice in many schools (mostly boys'). Again, they expect the study of literature to appear on the curriculum, but the absence of musical study escapes their notice. I make these rather obvious points to emphasize the standard of values that prevails among educational authorities and among parents. I know that there are exceptions; that in some schools there is plenty of good music, and musical standards are high, but these *are* exceptions. The idea that piano playing is a luxury and even a social asset dies hard, particularly in the case of girls. Musically speaking, there is in some ways a better case for learning a stringed instrument than the piano if a child must learn an instrument at all. The ear is trained by strings as it never can be by that mechanism, the piano, and a violin or 'cello has the saving grace that the sounds of practising are so painful and discouraging that the instrument is soon abandoned. In the rare cases where real aptitude is shown, it is possible to turn out, if not a professional, at least a good amateur, who will find a hundred times more pleasure in playing chamber music with other musicians than in being a social asset by herself in the deserted drawing-room, ploughing through the easier pieces of Chopin and Beethoven.

However, leaving the question of an instrument aside, there are two other important branches of music in schools—singing and musical appreciation. Singing is the form of practical music-making that offers more scope than any other to the amateur musician. England has always been a country of singers, as its hundreds of choral societies and choirs testify. They may not always be

of very good quality and their choice of works may be limited to *Elijah* and *The Crucifixion*, but these are points for which their conductors are responsible and primarily not even they, but the professors who taught them. More of that later. It is undoubtedly true that very good work is done by English amateur singers, and it is a refreshing sign of their vitality when they begin to commission works from young composers like Britten. Byrd's eminently sensible rhyme is well known to most people:—

Since singing is so fine a thing,
I wish all men would learn to sing.

There are few more satisfying outlets for lovers of music than singing with a body of people, and for this you do not need what is known as a "good voice". You need breath control, an ability to sight read and a love of good music. The first two can be taught, and the third could be evoked from a far larger number of people than at present. So much has been written recently about the importance of sight singing that I thankfully leave that and the subject of breath control to the experts. They are concerned with the decline of sight-singing and rightly so; it is to be hoped that the recent furore created by the late Harvey Grace and others about this matter will have its effect. But the subject of musical discrimination, the end to which all musical activities, whether singing, appreciation, or instrumental teaching, should be directed, has not had so much notice. It is more than time it did.

Education, we are repeatedly told, is a preparation for life. Unfortunately, many children can only regard music teaching of any kind as a preparation for boredom. The pleasures of adult singing, playing and listening are not apparent to children, unless the teacher makes them so. And the teacher is hampered at every turn. The school which takes singing out of the curriculum altogether before school certificate gives the child the impression that music has no value. The time-table that gives three or four periods a week to the study of literature and none at all to the study of music gives the child the feeling, whether conscious or not, that music either is of little importance or is a "difficult" art, beyond his understanding, a feeling which may prevail for the rest of his life, unless he discovers music for himself later, when he will have to pass, by trial and error, through stages wholly unnecessary had he been properly equipped and trained to listen when he was a child. These are generalities, I know. The trial and error method has produced discriminating music-lovers, and, obviously, music teaching at school does not always produce good results. But that is not a valid argument for its omission from the time-table.

When the crassness of parents and the utilitarian viewpoint of school authorities have been fully allowed for, there still remains what is, perhaps, the most important factor of all—the teacher. Good teaching can overcome stupidity at home and opposition at school. Conversely, putting musical appreciation and singing in the forefront of the time-table will not ensure its being properly taught. But when one has acknowledged the fact that first-rate teachers will always be as rare as first-class doctors, architects or plumbers, one has still the right to demand that so large a proportion of them need not be third, fourth and fifth rate. They may know the rules, the principles and the

theory of teaching, they may be able to play Chopin's *Fantaisie-Improvisation* without a single mistake, but this does not make the good teacher or the good musician. It is the approach to the child that is wrong in so many cases. Mr. Darling says, "the whole status of music teachers must be altered . . . they must be key members of the staff", but he adds hastily (this is the crux of the whole matter): "The personnel must be of such personal and artistic tonnage as to balance their status". I would rather put it this way—until music teachers are of a better quality, personally and artistically, they are unlikely either to gain a better status or to extract from school authorities more time for their subject and a full recognition of its importance. Music teachers are not always adult in their attitude to their work. Perhaps their college professors share with some other educationalists (though, fortunately, I think, a decreasing number) the view that children are a separate species, arriving on this planet at the age of six or seven, and quitting it at about seventeen or eighteen, or, in the majority of cases, dying prematurely at the age of fourteen. They have to be specially catered for—their mental nourishment need have nothing in common with that of the adult world, their tastes need be formed with no regard to adult tastes, their pleasures, artistic or otherwise, must be peculiarly their own and must have no connection with those of grown-ups. Percy Scholes, in his book on "Musical Appreciation" says (the capitals are his): "BE YOUNG". He never wrote a more disastrous couple of words. Grown-ups should *not* be young. They should be grown-up. The result of this dictum is seen in the school song, the school concert, and the musical appreciation class, with its "jolly" music, specially selected to suit the understandings of that peculiar and unnatural creature, the child.

I can remember when I was at school learning a song about May, and little birds in every bough, and all the rest of the spring claptrap. It had a very trilly, rippling accompaniment and I thought it beautiful. I knew no better, though I had enough taste to set the seal of my disapproval on Coleridge Taylor's *Mother loves Violets*. Now, there is a great deal of music published, drawn from the best composers of all times including our own, nor is there anything to stop composers writing specially for children, provided that it is *for* and not *down to* them. But there is also a vast amount of the tiresome "fairies at the bottom of my garden" stuff. Children do not prefer rubbish. But if they are given it, they do not always know it for what it is. Surely then, they should be given good music. They will rise to it, even if it is difficult, in a way they never rise to *Mother loves Violets*.

The school concert would demand an article to itself, so strongly do I feel on this ghastly function, in which appear, in the full light of day, all the hideous crimes against the art of music which have hitherto been concealed behind classroom doors. In a handbook which is, I understand, widely used by music students, Lucy Welch writes:—

Let all the singing classes perform, some with actions, some conducting their own songs, some with the teacher conducting. Both parents and girls enjoy this; every parent likes to think her girl is taking part, and the girls themselves enjoy the singing, which is not so much of an ordeal as performing alone.

Miss Welch advises the music staff of the school to meet together and, so to speak, pool their resources in the shape of individual pupils and classes. I imagine Miss Welch's influence must be quite far-reaching. A more horrible recipe for a school concert I never heard.

The prime consideration should always be the music, not the performers. The question is not which pupils and classes shall perform, but what the concert shall consist of, musically. The whole conception of the school concert as it now exists needs to be scrapped. It is not to be an opportunity for exhibiting the individual talents (if any) of the children, nor, conversely, is it the time for a display of disciplinary success on the part of the teacher, who has taught a class to sing *Land of Hope and Glory* as one voice. The object of the school concert, as of the adult concert, is to provide good music for the listeners.

It remains to consider the musical appreciation class, very much the Cinderella of music teaching. Enquiries made on the subject, in a number of schools drawn at random, produced the following information. Out of eleven elementary schools, two did not teach it all, three taught a little, mostly incidental in other classes such as singing, five taught the lives of the composers, one taught development of musical form, with illustrations from the piano and records; of twenty other schools, high schools, public and private, girls' and boys' schools, three did not teach the subject at all, three taught "a little", four only taught it to school certificate candidates, three taught lives of the composers, and seven seemed to be teaching it pretty thoroughly throughout the whole school. The elementary schools find it excessively difficult to fit the subject into the curriculum and to teach such a thing as musical appreciation to a class of forty or fifty must be little short of hell. Even so, I doubt if the approach through the lives of the composers is the right one. More listening and less talk might be more worth while; but to be frank, I feel such an enormous sympathy for those men and women who have to teach in the crowded classes and sometimes dismal surroundings of the elementary schools, that I have not the face to criticize them. I do not feel the same compunction in the case of public and private schools. The answers I received confirmed the suspicion I had already, that teachers of music are too seldom musicians. I grant that an indifferent performer may often be an excellent teacher. But I am not talking of technical ability. I want music teachers to read up-to-date musical literature and attend concerts, take part in practical music-making with adults. I want them to know far more than they have to teach, and live beyond, not confined by, the bounds of their school walls. Musical appreciation is a subject which needs vision, imagination, and enthusiasm. It should train children to listen and give them the critical equipment to make them discriminating listeners. Learning details of the life of Milton, and exercises in parsing, will not help children to enjoy *Lycidas*. Neither will the biography of Bach and learning to distinguish between a first and second inversion help a child to appreciate the double violin concerto. This is not to dismiss biographical details entirely, or to belittle the value of the theory of music. The first is permissible in small doses, and the second is a necessary equipment for really musical children, but it is misery to those who are not capable of pursuing it

into the higher and more interesting stages. A proportion of any class consists of children who do not even learn the piano. Yet it is possible to train these children to listen to music and to love it. Ralph Hill has some forceful words on the subject of music teaching in his collection of essays, *Challenges*, and I cannot do better than to quote him in conclusion:—

In 1943 Ernest Newman remarked in *The Sunday Times* that music in England was ninety-nine per cent. a business and one per cent. an art. Professional musicians appear to uphold proudly this deplorable tradition. The worst offenders are the diploma-ridden teachers (the diploma is too often the hallmark of a British musical business man or woman), who for the most part are as lacking in genuine artistic feeling and understanding as they are competent and well versed in the ritual and pedantry of so-called "musical education".

Strong words, perhaps, but they need saying, for if we are to have the "increase in instructed listeners" that Mr. Darling wants, we need better guides, or leader and led will never get out of the ditch into which pedantry, childishness (in the worst sense) and lack of true musicianship have brought them.

Correspondence

CAMBRIDGE.

To the Editor, THE MUSIC REVIEW.

19th June, 1944.

BRAHMS' PIANO SONATAS

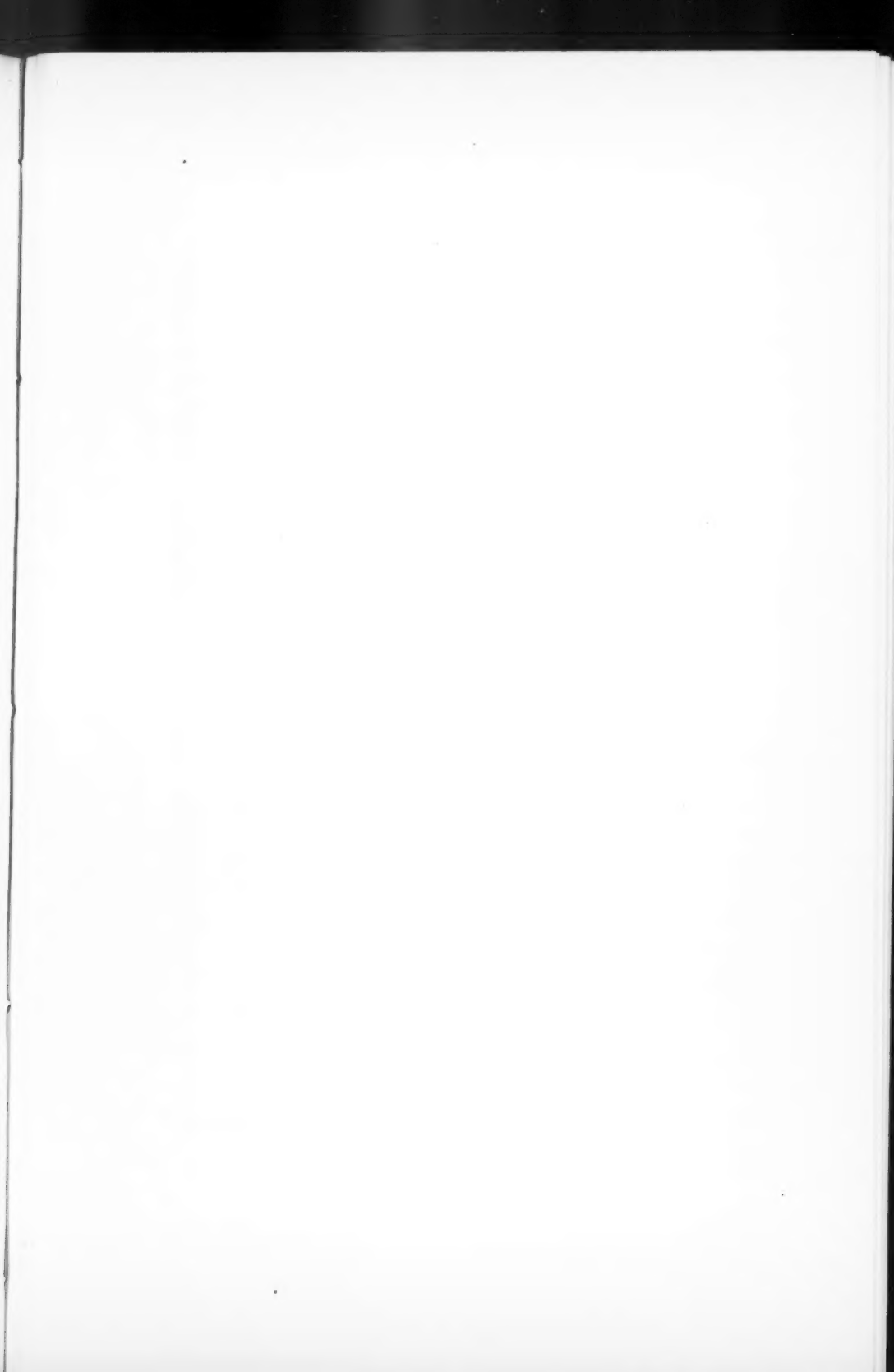
SIR,—I cannot resist offering some remarks on Mr. Mason's article on Brahms' Piano Sonatas in the May issue of *THE MUSIC REVIEW*, which, if faint praise can damn, has consigned these works to perdition beyond hope of redemption. Indeed, Mr. Mason himself seems to be vaguely aware of the back-handed nature of his compliments; the first paragraph on page 116 betrays an uneasy feeling that he is not getting it across.

Mr. Mason seeks to rebut a charge of juvenility. To comment on all the irrationalities would take too much space; but confining our attention to pages 115 and 116 we find references to "a rather useless introduction"; "senseless big chords"; "a coda of obscure origin" and "a final return of the opening absurdities". But surely Mr. Mason can see that these are precisely the grounds on which critics have deemed the works juvenile? Can Sonata Form which exhibits such defects claim to be mature? The next paragraph, however, contains the cream of the article, for in one sentence he talks of "introductory rubbish . . . splitting the music up into sections" and in the very next sentence extols "the coherence and complete relevance" of the work—though in the previous paragraph he has referred to "grandiose and regrettably irrelevant chords". He goes on to say that "one can easily ignore them"; but if Mr. Mason can ignore what by his own description are serious blemishes, he must have a vastly different conception of Sonata Form from you or me.

Yours faithfully,

LESLIE ORREY.

[C.M. writes:—Mr. Orrey mentions many irrationalities, but comments only on those arising in the discussion of one movement, and there conveniently omits my qualifying remarks which make the apparent inconsistency at least intelligible.]





CARL ENGEL

(Reproduced by kind permission from "A Birthday Offering", see review on page 199.)

Carl Engel: 1883-1944

BY

HUBERT J. FOSS

"Let us now praise famous men . . . such as found out musical tunes . . . some there be, which have no memorial. . . . But these were merciful men, whose righteousness hath not been forgotten." *Ecclesiasticus* xlv.

Not quite "no memorial", for Carl Engel's work stands; but a large part of Engel's memorial lies in the works of other people, both composers and scholars. Fuller-Maitland described his own life of critic and editor as that of "a door-keeper of music": Engel was more than that, for he was music's midwife, nurse, and, indeed, general nurturer. A great humanist, a great musicologist, Carl Engel was also the great encourager of the young composer, and champion of the "new music". His position in the musical life and history of the United States was, and still is, unique.

Born in Paris in 1883, just after the death of that scholar-namesake in whom he was so interested but to whom he was unrelated (he was, however, a descendant of the Krolls of Berlin), Engel was educated at the Universities of Strasbourg and Munich, studying composition at the latter city with Thuille. In 1905 he went to America, living there till his death, and becoming a naturalized American citizen. He joined the staff of the Boston Music Company as a junior, and remained there till 1922, during which time he became Editor-in-chief and Musical Adviser. The cultural life in Boston at this period was rich and varied, and Engel was an integral part of the Boston artistic circle, the circle that included Amy Lowell the poetess, Oliver Herford, Charles Martin Loeffler, Edward Burlingame Hill, Henry F. Gilbert, Henry Eichheim, George W. Chadwick, Arthur Foote, Arthur Shepherd, and many other names of eminence.

There is one name of which, on taking up the pen, one wondered how long one could delay mention, and here it is in the third paragraph—Oscar Sonneck. Engel and Sonneck were lifelong friends. Not only as scholars were the patterns of their lives inextricably interwoven. For in 1922 Oscar Sonneck was invited to leave the post of Librarian of the Music Division at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., to become musical director and president of G. Schirmer, Inc., the great New York publishing house which had a family connection with the Boston Music Company. Sonneck recommended Engel as his successor. Librarian and publisher thus exchanged professions. At the Congressional Library, Engel remained till Sonneck's unexpected death in 1929, when he took over the editing of the *Musical Quarterly*, and again succeeded Sonneck, this time as president of Schirmer's. Only, Engel held both major posts simultaneously for the next five years.

Washington is a little farther from New York than Liverpool from London: neither the Library nor Schirmer's is a part-time job. The difficulties must have been immense. But when I told Engel that he could not hope to carry on both jobs and live, he merely replied, "A man is exactly as good as his secretaries". He was not one whit less projective in his plans because he had two beacon-rays to control. And the history of those years shows that Engel's secretaries were not the only people of high quality. The rest of his life is best described in a consideration of his achievements, though it should perhaps be added that Engel was made Doctor of Music at Oberlin College and *Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur*.

As a music-publisher, Carl Engel set a completely new standard in his profession, at the Boston Music Company. He made the catalogue distinctive among American catalogues both by what he accepted, and by the way he presented it. He was eager to see new works by unknown composers, and ready to back those who showed talent. Their works he gave to the world in distinctive formats, to which he devoted imagination and some of the fine tradition of Boston printing, so ably led by Daniel Berkeley Updike. Engel had a barometric sensitiveness to musical stirrings of the atmosphere. Thus when

the revival of composition in England was almost unnoticed in England by the publishing trade, Engel gave a start to more than one English composer who has to-day justified his foresight.

The larger sphere of G. Schirmer's was, on the whole, somewhat less congenial to Engel. He found himself when he arrived with a large number of commitments already made but not yet carried out for reasons of marketing and so forth. He still kept his finger on the pulse of international music, and kept his great influence, not only in American music but also in the continual flow of refugees from Europe from the pre-Hitler and post-Hitler of the early 1930's.

When Engel went to the Library of Congress, he inherited a magnificent framework already built for him by his friend, Sonneck. It was Engel's task, under the wise and eager guidance of the chief librarian, Herbert Putnam, to amplify and complete that framework: in his own words, "The broad and firm foundations laid by Mr. Sonneck made it comparatively easy to build upon them: to elevate the structure, to decorate the façade, to ornament the coping". That is the modesty of the scholar. It could not have been easy. But as the present Music Librarian, Mr. Harold Spivacke, has written, tribute is due to Engel "not merely for the permanent mark he made on the Library of Congress, but also because he changed the very conceptions of the function of a music library and the possible extent of its influence".

To begin with, Engel's *Annual Reports* were readable and precious, converting blue-book statistics into a humanistic record. Further, he was no dusty book-worm. A conversation with him is recorded by Mr. Spivacke, in which he once said that as he walked down the corridors, he could imagine thousands of note-heads pursuing him and wailing, "We want to be heard, we want to be heard". To this end, Engel linked up with Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, who gave to the Library not only manuscripts but living concerts, and eventually the Coolidge Auditorium. Engel was proud of this addition to the official buildings: he had cause, for it is the most beautiful small hall for music that I have ever seen. Restrained and shapely in design, it is intended for the peaceful hearing of music under perfect conditions and no pains or money were spared to make it ideal in comfort of seating and in acoustics. The Coolidge Foundation was one of Carl Engel's outlets: it is centrally characteristic of the man that he should be impartially interested in a new quartet and an ancient holograph. To him all music worthy of the name was equally alive. He himself lived no less in the time and mind of Schubert when he was writing about him, than in the time and mind of his contemporaries when he was selecting their works for prize or publication. Other foundations followed, for concerts, for endowing original research, and (to quote Spivacke) thus "a bridge was built between the printed page and the living sound". The Friends of Music in the Library of Congress was a nation-wide organization strutting and supporting this Engelian bridge. Nor must we forget the "Archive of American Folk-song" which he created in 1928, at a time when the subject was almost untouched by scholar and composer alike.

As a writer of criticism, Engel had a flowery and picturesque style which always tempered his shrewdness of judgment and outspoken opinions with the humour of simile and instance. *Alla Breve* (1921) and *Discords Mingled* (1931) are the only two books, and they are essays collected from the *Musical Quarterly* and the *Atlantic Monthly*. I have not seen the first of the two, but I am a devotee of the second, which certainly ought to be known on this side of the water. It has an extraordinary poignancy. The biographical essays are written, it seems, from personal knowledge of the subject, not from book-learning, and "Music we shall never hear" is but one good example of Engel's native whimsicality of mind. All Engel's writings were occasional, but most of them were definite contributions to knowledge when they were not delicate (and learned) flights of fancy.

Carl Engel's output as a composer was small, but most of it is of far higher quality than the louder-voiced and more often played works of many composers to whom he gave their first chance. For Engel composed, as he dined, eclectically, from choice and an informed taste. He once wrote some fly-away piano pieces, and called them by the

names of perfumes: it is typical, for he was more keenly aware than his critics of their evanescent quality. The musical writings are occasional, but do not wait "on time's forelock". *Triptych*, for violin and piano, is the longest: it is dated 1920, and it shows all Engel's Romanticism, and all Engel's sense of the patterns in music that the later age weaves. The songs are the most easily approachable. *Trois Sonnets* are the peak, perhaps. In *Dors, ma belle*, Engel reproduces in music the sensitive irony that coloured his own life. There are, too, the "Simple ditties", "The sea shell" (with its companion) to poems by Amy Lowell—a little touched by the influence of Liszt—"The Never-Lonely Child", a set of children's verses set suitably to music, which is one of Engel's most delicate works. Essentially a stylist, and an understander of styles, Engel had the opposite faculty of projecting a style in his music: as a result, his songs are each perfectly wrought for their poems and purposes.

To try to present in words—Engel's own medium, for he was a brilliant talker—this vivid personality is beyond the scope of a mere writer. John Erskine essayed the task in the first contribution to *The Birthday Offering*—a *Festschrift* of only last year, on Engel's 60th birthday. To it Putnam and Peterkin, Barber and Schönberg, Cooper-smith, Einstein, Downes, Grainger, Lourié, Schuman, and Kinkeldey contributed, among others. John Erskine failed to pin down this butterfly spirit to the board: so we still cannot examine Engel's wings at leisure, but must wait for the glint to reach us on his exciting flight. There is no exact English parallel to Engel. He had a good part of W. H. Hadow's learning and belief in general culture: a slice of Edward Dent's wit and incision: some of Peter Warlock's sense of life and hedonism, and more than a touch of Hubert Parry's organizing genius. It was a composite mind, and a mere catalogue, like Gilbert's recipe for the "Heavy Dragoon", would not be entertaining here without Sullivan's music.

Engel's mind was of the best type of enquiring mind. He had no *naïveté*: he was a man of the world. He attained simplicity through hard thought. But he had the power of "Open Sesame"—of unlocking the doors, whether they were the doors of the composer's mind or of the truth underlying a palimpsest. Engel probed, till he found the truth: in wine, in food, in music, in catalogues, in biography. He was not a contented man. He was both precise and imaginative. He went on looking.

I would class Engel within the first rank of musical minds I have met: and I would do so not so much because of his immense learning but because of his immense musical sympathy. As a last word, I add that personally he was one of the most astonishing people: his talk, his letters, his whims, his solemnities, are not to be reproduced in a single essay, but they are a glowing memory, never to lose their light.

Book Reviews

A Birthday Offering to Carl Engel. Compiled and edited by Gustave Reese. Pp. viii + 233. (G. Schirmer, Inc.) 1943. Limited edition, not for sale.

Elsewhere in this issue Hubert Foss has described something of the activities, taste and range of influence of Carl Engel. If he had to die so soon it was at least fitting that so many of his distinguished friends and colleagues should have had the opportunity of his sixtieth birthday on which to pay their collective tribute, so admirably arranged and presented by Mr. Gustave Reese, his successor to the editorial chair of *The Musical Quarterly*.

Any anthology of authors must always present difficulties to a reviewer, how much more so the brilliant flowering of this unique company which touches with easy assurance upon such widely divergent subjects as "Thoughts on Translation" and "Birthday

Canons": "International Copyright Protection" and "Editing a Musical Magazine". One cannot "review"; one just ponders and observes. Observes that here in Britain we set no store by birthdays, apart from that footling epitome of adolescence which is so often the core of "twenty-first" celebrations: then one realizes that no similar *Festschrift* could be produced over here because there was only one Carl Engel, figuratively speaking if not in actual fact, and because in Britain the curse of overweening parochialism would inevitably turn any such venture into a depressing sequence of "local boys'" mutual back-scratchings. One of the most refreshing features of the States is that they have no "local boys", so that their musicology can therefore be instinctively broad-minded without striving for latitude of mind in the manner of an over-conscientious pedant. Breadth of mind was characteristic of Engel, as of "his" *Quarterly*: no man can have had a more apposite tribute than this *Birthday Offering* which it has been a privilege to read and is now a pleasant duty to recommend.

G. N. S.

Sa'adyah Gaon on the Influence of Music. By Henry George Farmer. Pp. xi + 109, with a Facsimile of the Bodleian MS. containing Sa'adyah's text. (Arthur Probsthain.) 1943. 21s.

We do not know exactly when Sa'adyah was born in Egypt, nor have we any reliable report on his early education. But it is certain that he was a great expert not only in Jewish, but also in Arabic matters, when he had to leave his home country in about A.D. 915. He was for some years in Palestine and then came to Babylonia, and here—although a stranger—he became head of the Jewish Academy in Sura, an office with which the title *Gaon* was connected. He held this office from A.D. 928–932, and again from about 936 until his death in about 942. Between the two periods of his office, in A.D. 933, he wrote in Bagdad, the centre of Islamic civilization, his *Book on Doctrines and Beliefs* (*Kitāb al-amānāt wal-i'tihādāt*), at the end of which we find a passage on the influence of Music, which always had offered great difficulties to understanding and had not been properly explained so far. To this passage the present monograph is devoted.

Farmer shows that Sa'adyah depends here on al-Kindi, the great Muslim philosopher and scientist, who lived in Bagdad most of his life, where he wrote his many learned books and treatises. He died there some twenty years before Sa'adyah was born. We know of several treatises on Music written by him. He depends on Greek sources which had been translated into Arabic by Hunain b. Ishāk and his pupils during the ninth century. One of al-Kindi's treatises contains the passage in question. Farmer publishes the Arabic text according to the unique Berlin MS, with an English translation and a commentary. Al-Kindi's passage begins in the following way (I quote Farmer's translation):

As for the rhythms (*iḥkāt*) which are genres to the rest of the rhythms, they are divided into eight rhythms, and they are: the first *thakīl*, the second *tha īl*, the *makhūri*. . . . As for the first *thakīl* it is three consecutive beats (*naharāt*), then a quiescent beat, then the rhythm returns as it began. And the second *thakīl* is three consecutive beats, then a quiescent beat, then a movent beat, then the rhythm returns as it began. . . .

After having enumerated and described the eight rhythms, al-Kindi deals in a second part with the influence of the different sounds, connected with the rhythms, on the human body.

Sa'adyah combines the two passages of al-Kindi, taking over sometimes verbally the text of his source. But instead of *rhythms* and *beats* we read in his text *melodies* and *notes*. His text begins:—

I say now that there are eight melodies (*alḥān*), and to all and each are measures (derived from the intoning (*tanghīm*)). As for the first of them, its measure is three consecutive notes (*naghamāt*) and one quiescent (note). And the second (its measure) is three consecutive notes and one quiescent (note) and one movent (note). And these two melodies move the strength (of the humour) of the blood and the temperament of sovereignty and dominion. . . .

The Arabic text which had been written by Sa'adyah in *Arabic* letters, has been transcribed into *Hebrew* letters. So it is to be found in the two MSS. of the text (in Oxford and Leningrad) which alone are preserved. S. Landauer, in his edition of the book

(Leiden, 1880) has retranscribed the text into Arabic letters. The two MSS. differ sometimes largely from each other and show that Sa'adyah's original text had not been left unaltered.

As most of the Jews did not understand Arabic, Sa'adyah's book was translated into Hebrew at an early date. The translation generally known is that of the elder Ibn Tibbon which was finished in A.D. 1186. In the passage on Music he presupposes already the text which we find in the two MSS. of Sa'adyah of which we know. But Sa'adyah's text had been translated twice before Ibn Tibbon. One of these earlier translations, called "paraphrase" (*pitron*), was made not later than the eleventh century—the Vatican MS. bears the date 1095—the other was made by Abraham b. Ḥiyyah, who died in A.D. 1136, and besides, we have a Hebrew compendium of Sa'adyah's book made by Berekyah ha-Nakdān which depends on b. Ḥiyyah's translation. Farmer has dealt carefully with these Hebrew translations. The most important is the "Pitron", the oldest one, of which a number of MSS. are known, preserved in Paris, Parma, the Vatican, Munich and Oxford. Most of these were not available to Farmer. The passage on Music was published, according to the Munich MS., by Steinschneider, very poorly, as he did not understand the text. The excellent Bodleian MS. Oppenheim 599 (No. 1224 in Neubauer's Catalogue) is incomplete at the end and does not contain the passage in question—Farmer quotes occasionally the two Bodleian MSS. which is not correct. But the Bodleian MS. Pocock 17 (No. 1427 in Neubauer's Catalogue, made up of a number of short extracts from various writers) contains—as Dr. Teicher has pointed out—on Fol. 243-245, the passage in question. It is a quite modern MS. and not very reliable. This text and that printed by Steinschneider from the Munich MS. were alone available to Farmer. He has taken great trouble in restoring the text and was supported in this task by such an authority as Professor W. B. Stevenson in Edinburgh. The result of his investigation—the chief part of the present book—is that the translator had an Arabic text of Sa'adyah's passage in his hands which differed from that in the two MSS. of Sa'adyah's book preserved, and which is presupposed by Ibn Tibbon's translation. There can be no doubt that Sa'adyah himself spoke—like al-Kindī—quite correctly of *rhythms* and *beats*, and Farmer shows that this correct text of Sa'adyah is presupposed by Abraham b. Ḥiyyah and Berekyah ha-Nakdān also. A later copyist "corrected" *rhythms* to *melodies*, and *beats* to *notes*, and so Sa'adyah's passage on Music became quite unintelligible.

Dr. Farmer can now give, in Chapter IX of his book, a real interpretation of the Rhythmic Modes which Sa'adyah had taken over from al-Kindī, and compare these theories of al-Kindī-Sa'adyah with those of other Arabic writers on Music. In Chapter X he draws some interesting and important conclusions. A possible pedigree of the texts concludes this very valuable monograph. P. K.

Psychology for Musicians. By Percy C. Buck. Pp. viii + 115. (O.U.P.) 1944. 7s. 6d.

To summarize a paragraph from Sir Percy's preface: this is an entirely rewritten version of a book which he had completed by Christmas 1939, and which was put aside for publication in happier times. The *Luftwaffe*, however, had other ideas and destroyed the manuscript together with the rest of the author's notes, papers, music and library. The earlier manuscript, Sir Percy tells us, was more formal and sedate, carefully documented and full of references and verified quotations. The book as we now have it provides informal, easy reading which acts as a vivid reminder of the author's lectures at the Royal College and re-creates in black and white, as nearly as possible, the stimulating atmosphere which always pervaded Sir Percy's classroom. As one of the book's dedicatees I am deeply conscious of the honour thus conferred.

This is not really a book on psychology at all. It is rather a digest of the course of lectures which the author used to give with the object of making music students think for themselves about human behaviour in relation to music. Bearing in mind how little the average music student ever thinks about anything, the reader will realize the

difficulty of the task and marvel at the consistently attractive lucidity of Sir Percy's approach to his subject. There is much to be said for informal easy reading when it is as suggestive as this.

Among the most valuable pages are those dealing with "imagination", which Sir Percy defines as "the power of seeing things as they really are". Very few British musicians have it, this elusive quality which distinguishes between the mere musician and the fully-fledged artist, the man who plods through his work laboriously from bar to bar and the man who displays the music for the glorious creation it is by seeing the work whole and reproducing it as a whole. What present-day conductors and performers come out on the credit side of this comparison? The task of filling up the blanks I'd rather leave to you.

This book, read with the attention it deserves, may transfer a few more musicians to the credit side; if it does, I am sure its author will be very happy. G. N. S.

Introduction to Counterpoint. By R. O. Morris. Pp. 55. (O.U.P.) 1944. 4s.

The writing of counterpoint exercises for practice is not a very engaging task, however necessary it is to musical salvation. That it is necessary is an implied part of Dr. Morris' musical belief. He approaches the problem in a logical and musical way, and shows his humanity by a shy reference (in 3-part free counterpoint) to "the few who find real enjoyment in the solution of pure technical problems". He writes, on p. 45, "in my experience", which brings student and text-book writer closer together, and for each step he provides admirably smooth and logical specimens of completed exercises as well as *canti fermi* (and advice) for further work. It is an important point for the student, this one of models, for it is by no means certain that the immediate master can provide in practice what he says in theory, and counterpoint can be, and often is, a mass of parrot-like rules, unexplained and therefore followed only by obedience unlit by musical intelligence. Here we see in each case a musical entity which follows the clear path: we can judge the importance and meaning of the rules by the success of the examples.

Dr. Morris starts from a fresh angle. While acknowledging the school of Palestrinian counterpoint (and no one knows more about it), he elects to teach the eighteenth-century counterpoint of Bach. There are theoretical objections, no doubt, but so much strict counterpoint of the alleged Palestrinian kind has been taught on entirely fictitious rules that the objections (mainly those of ear) vanish. But the terms of the old "strict" counterpoint are kept, and we proceed from species to species in a normal progress. But Dr. Morris makes his earlier stepping-stones, of note against note and two notes to one, thoroughly interesting. We certainly progress to freer methods, but not from a hide-bound constriction. There is insistence on the harmonic basis of counterpoint, and also that "strict" counterpoint should not begin until elementary harmony up to the seventh and passing notes is known: some are inclined to think, I with them, that the beginnings of harmony-study should be made on contrapuntal lines. Dr. Morris does not demand an early familiarity with the C clefs, and omits their use till a quite advanced stage to ease "the problem of deciphering". That is a concession to the facts; in practice it is a rather dismal necessity, caused by the lack of good teaching and the confining of students to G and F clefs. The enormous advantage of getting to know the C clefs (including the soprano) by rote at an early stage is something that is only realized in later life by those who were in this way ill-taught and so lack its valuable background.

This is a book of 55 pages only, but it is packed with musical common-sense. Without being patronising, Dr. Morris argues from the known to the unknown, confining his student here and letting out the leash when it is best. By starting from the Bachian harmony known to all of us, he greases the slip-way, and progress towards the open sea of music becomes thereby easier, though no less of a responsibility. It would do no harm for highly accomplished musicians to turn away from their cross-word puzzles or chess problems and work out some of these exercises. There is only one misprint in the book that caught my eye (p. 32)—a venial one.

H. J. F.

Proceedings of the Musical Association. Session LXIX, 1942-43. Pp. xvii + 104. (Whitehead & Miller, Ltd.) 21s.

The *Proceedings* of 1942-43 contain four papers on subjects differing widely in their scope and treatment. Two are concerned with historical research, both about wind instruments; another surveys the possibilities of music in a land which has no musical past, and another chats about the singers of a period, part of which still remains within living memory.

Mr. Langwill's paper on the double-bassoon is the result of patient research, such as could have been done only by an enthusiast. Every scrap of information that can be assembled about an instrument—a wind sub-bass—which for nearly three centuries was always desired, but was always denied a regular place in the orchestra, has been brought together, with all the sources whence it was derived. The paper serves its purpose admirably in providing the foundation and framework for any future attempts to set forth the history of the instrument.

The story resolves itself largely into the difficulties that makers encountered, not so much in making an out-size bassoon, but in making an instrument that could be effectively played by an ordinary-sized man. There need be no limit to the size of an instrument, but there is always a limit to the size of the player, his fingers, arms, and lips. As long as the player's finger-tips had to cover the note-holes, the double-bassoon remained almost too unmanageable to be wholly satisfactory for the purpose for which it was intended, and it was only after the middle of last century that adequate key-mechanism came to the rescue and enabled the player to control holes which were large enough and properly situated.

That Beethoven and Haydn wrote for the double-bassoon was only because that instrument happened to be used in and near Vienna during their time, mainly in military bands, for which the local makers supplied the instruments. That these great composers admitted the instrument to their orchestras on certain occasions suggests that the Austrian and Bohemian makers were able to produce tolerably manageable double-bassoons before the makers in other countries. Elsewhere the double-bassoon parts of these composers were either omitted or were played on serpents or ophicleides (in the 8 ft. octave) until the modern instrument appeared about 70 or 80 years ago.

R. Morley Pegge's paper on the "Evolution of the modern French Horn" begins about 1750, when the hand-horn or "stopping" technique was discovered, and is written by one who combines the experience of a skilled player with a taste for historical research.

Mr. Pegge describes the hand-technique very clearly, and this may perhaps dispel the notion that the horn parts, as played in the period from Mozart to Schumann, consisted of alternately resonant open sounds and stifled closed sounds. Actually, the scale in the middle and upper register, provided no great dynamic range is attempted, is surprisingly even. This is no mere supposition or hearsay, for it can be done now by anyone who sufficiently studies the hand-technique; moreover, the writer has heard it done, and by Mr. Pegge himself. The advent of the valve-system largely cancelled out the advantages of the hand-technique, but only by very slow degrees, and Mr. Pegge makes it clear that the hand in the bell of the horn is still an important part of its technique, and one which should never be neglected.

Of the modern horn, and the vexed question of French versus German types, Mr. Pegge holds the view that the tone-quality depends more on the player than on the instrument, and we are bound to respect the opinion of an experienced player. But the tendency of modern players to use the short-tubed horn in high B flat more and more is rather disturbing in view of what has already happened to the trumpet. The shortening may give greater ease and certainty in performance, but surely not without some loss of quality. Mr. Pegge thinks that the real French horn is doomed. If that is so, and if its extinction is to be regretted, the blame will not fall on the players, but on the composers who now write *any sort of part* for an instrument which has definite characteristics and definite limitations.

Miss Rucroft's paper on the music of New Zealand gives little specific information

about the musical state of that distant land, and is largely concerned with discouraging on the aims of musical education in schools. All the familiar jargon of the musical educationalist is employed, and the usual counsel of perfection, which is so often heard but so rarely acted upon, is duly trotted out.

Mr. J. Mewburn Levin, in his paper *Santley and the Singers of his Time*, browses reminiscently and pleasantly among the great singers of the age that knew Mario, Lablache, Garcia, Sims Reeves, and Santley, and extended into the period of Ben Davies, Kirkby Lunn, and Clara Butt. The lore of the great singers of the past always prompts the question: Has the age of great singers gone for ever, or did the singers of our youthful years only appear to be better than the singers of our more mature years? Whatever the answer may be, it is certain that we now do not make such a fuss about our singers as did our grandfathers, and for that let us be duly thankful.

This, the 69th volume of the Musical Association's records, is brightened by some excellent photographs illustrating the first two papers. A. C.

Music of our Time (Hinrichsen's Year Book, 1944). Edited by Ralph Hill and Max Hinrichsen. Pp. 308. (Hinrichsen Edition Ltd.) 12s. 6d.

"*Hinrichsen's Year Book, 1944: Music of our Time* is a unique publication in British musical literature." We quote the first two lines of the book's Introduction.

Well, perhaps it is; but so are *The Singing Class Circular*, *The Choir* and even *THE MUSIC REVIEW* (to blow our own trumpet in similar fashion). Like all collaborationist efforts which aim at providing *multum in parvo*, *Hinrichsen's Year Book* embraces a whole gamut of varied abilities and styles, so much so that it may be described as an example of vaulting ambition driven to its Shakespearian conclusion.

Mr. Hinrichsen has aimed at providing a comprehensive guide to musical activities in Britain, and some of the contributors succeed admirably in their individual spheres; e.g. Robin Hull, Ralph Hill, Alec Robertson, W. H. Mellers and Alfred Loewenberg: and although Mr. Westrup's ideas of what constitutes musical research by no means coincide with the reviewer's, his paper is stimulating and draws attention to some important work which might otherwise be overlooked. Raymond Tobin falls a victim to an old misconception when he writes that music, like every other art, must progress or perish (p. 18): as Joad would say, "It all depends what you mean by progress"—what does Mr. Tobin mean? Does the sequence Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Moeran, Rubbra, Walton, Britten indicate progress? Are full houses for any programme of classics and any standard of performance a sign of progress? Is the present-day decline of music criticism a sign of progress? And yet can we say that music is perishing?

While commending the very useful index of recorded works on p. 41, must we be saddled with the invidious table of nationalities? Nationalism applied to music does nothing but damage—circumscribing invention, restricting the development of mutual understanding between nations and encouraging that exclusive brand of pedantry and narrow-mindedness of which this country already has more than a fair share. If this *Year Book* could be expanded and internationalized we feel it would be of far greater value than it is at present. Some account of United States activities, including recent research and details of their outstanding new publications (of which there are a great many) would be very welcome and, we think, "unique"; whereas anyone can find out all he wants about our schools of music without resort to *Music of our Time*. G. N. S.

Music in the Five Towns. By Reginald Nettel. Pp. x + 120. (O.U.P.) 1944. 8s. 6d.

The author of this book is an industrial wage-earner and his subject is amateur music-making in the Potteries. So much we learn from the introductory matter. Browsing through the book we quickly notice letters—from Elgar, Delius, Holst and others. Letters of praise and thanks to North Staffordshire choirs who sang their works—often under the composers' baton,—when London would not hear them. Reading the book, we realize that here is a chapter of our musical history which amply deserved to be written; and it is written with remarkable insight. Mr. Nettel's achievement is that, although dealing

with the musical life of one relatively small community, his book is in no sense parochial. Its message is universal and it amounts to nothing less than this:—

Works of art will always become most readily integrated into the life and history of a nation when they are put into the hands of those people for whom they fill an immediate need. That need is pleasure, and the lasting, satisfying pleasure of cultured recreation is quickly learnt where there is able leadership.

We are promised that, after the war, People's Colleges are to be set up as part of the new era in education and that their essential functions are to be cultural and recreational. Music must be one of their major activities and it is then certain that the proud singers of the provinces will regain their prime and, further, a likelihood that orchestras, of equal standing with our northern choirs, will develop. The spirit may spread to the Great Overcrowded Area—and London's musical life will be the better for it. People whom Mr. Nettel knew walked miles each night—in their working dirt—to attend rehearsals for first performances of English oratorios. One such effort on the part of one such individual did more for music than the assiduous attendance of an entire suburb at a promenade concert can ever have done.

J. B.

The Baton and The Jackboot. By Berta Geissmar. Pp. 404. (Hamish Hamilton.) 1944. 15s.

In essence Dr. Geissmar's book is a personal diary covering the years 1933–42, during which period she has been personal secretary to Wilhelm Furtwängler and since 1936 to Sir Thomas Beecham.

The story of Furtwängler's struggle with the Nazi authorities is of absorbing interest. Like a nightmare which fascinates its victim throughout a series of fantastic and seemingly impossible developments, this narrative has kept the reviewer's eyes glued to the text for nearly 200 pages in succession. Of a sensitive, retiring and fundamentally modest personality, Furtwängler is portrayed here as a very human character—musically a fanatical idealist, politically quite unawakened—forced against his strongest inclinations to take a hand in trying to obstruct, circumvent and avoid (each in turn) the sadistic machinations of Nazi thuggery. Dr. Geissmar's book is selective, *i.e.* she tells the truth . . . and nothing but the truth, but those details which are omitted would not affect our basic conclusions: that Furtwängler, by staying in Berlin, prejudiced his own reputation in two respects—he became a "suspicious character" to the Nazis, who resented any show of independence of spirit, and he incurred the disapproval, outside Germany, of many of his professional colleagues, who felt that he should have left Germany as a matter of principle even if for no more material reason. Dr. Geissmar shows that the problem was never a simple one, nor are we even now in a position to judge whether he was right or wrong. After the war, no doubt, we shall find that the high standard of German orchestral performances has been maintained largely as a result of Furtwängler's *artistic* integrity. The whole problem forms one of many illustrations of the fact that music and politics won't mix.

The latter half of the book is an entertaining saga of Beecham's adventures between 1936 and his departure for Australia in the early days of the war. The account of his German tour—with its series of official processions, receptions and repetitions of the same official speech—is particularly amusing.

There are some "obvious translations from the German" and too many printer's errors—both more prevalent towards the end of the narrative. In this respect careful revision would greatly improve a second edition.

G. N. S.

A Mingled Chime: Leaves from an Autobiography. By Sir Thomas Beecham, Bart. Pp. 198. (Hutchinson & Co., Ltd.) 1944. 16s.

The popular Press has invented many legends about Sir Thomas Beecham. One is that he is the *enfant terrible* of the musical world; but it may be said at once that this book is extremely good-natured and says nothing that could embarrass anybody. Another legend is that he may be a genius but is not a very good man of business. This was contradicted flatly some twenty years ago or more by an eminent legal luminary

who said to me personally, "Beecham not a good man of business? I don't know what you mean. I've been giving him a great deal of advice lately and he has always acted upon it". Sir Thomas respects his own privacy and gives us no scandal; his personal life he evidently thinks quite uninteresting. But he has plenty of interesting things to say about music in general, and he also gives us characteristic intimate portraits of Delius, Ethel Smyth, Diaghilev, Philip Heseltine and others. It is to Beecham more than to anyone else that we all owe the revelation of Delius; the beauty of his music, and especially of his dramatic work, grows increasingly upon us, while that of his more celebrated contemporaries fades even now towards insignificance. The other thing for which we all have to be grateful to Beecham is his single-hearted devotion to the cause of opera. He has had to occupy himself with various other branches of music in the course of a life-time, and we can admire his versatility; but it is evident from this book that throughout that life, opera has been his main preoccupation from the day when he was first taken to see *La Traviata*. All opera-lovers ought to read this book, not merely for the many amusing stories—it would be hard indeed for anyone to write a book about opera without amusing stories—but for the sound sense and the penetrating analysis of our English operatic situation that are conspicuous in these pages.

He began his operatic career in 1902 with "the English Ring", i.e. *The Bohemian Girl*, *Maritana* and *The Lily of Killarney*, and realized the "wretched conditions under which great works of art were being presented" while every care, preparation and luxury was lavished on West End musical comedies. I well remember old Count Seebach, the famous Intendant of the Dresden Opera, telling me in 1920 that these were far the finest and most memorable entertainments that he saw in London. He probably never saw an English opera at all; even now they are regarded as being far too sordid and shabby for any member of good society to be seen at. Beecham, as soon as he had gained the necessary experience, went ahead and produced the operas which he himself enjoyed, regardless of what managers or critics had to say, and for this courage opera-lovers have indeed cause to be grateful; not merely for just those performances, many of which I recall with delight, but for the encouragement which they gave to composers, listeners, and I hope to singers as well, to go on showing courage and not to stick to the beaten track. It was typical of the old directors of Covent Garden that none of them had the remotest knowledge of Chaliapin or of Russian Opera and that they simply refused to contemplate Beecham's project of introducing Russian music to the London stage, even though *Eugene Onegin* had been produced in English as far back as 1892 and in Italian at Covent Garden in 1906.

Sir Thomas has some sensible remarks about the old Covent Garden *connoisseurs*:—

It is inevitable in a house where all the operas are sung in their original tongues, and not in that of the locality, that purely vocal qualities such as tonal beauty, facility of execution and variety of colour should be regarded as the all-in-all of the art, with small concern for the niceties of diction and dramatic point, without which an opera sung in a language which everyone knows becomes an absurdity and an irritation.

It is a pity that the present volume comes to an end in 1924, for it would have been interesting to read Sir Thomas' reflections on the conditions of opera in the United States. There are many people who take a pessimistic view of the future—Sir Thomas himself appears now and then to be one of them—and deplore the passing away of all those wealthy patrons of music who kept "grand opera" going in the past. Sir Thomas, however, has conducted and directed both "international" opera in foreign languages and opera in English; indeed, he has by his example set something of a standard to which English performances ought to attain, although he is inclined to take the view often expressed by Ethel Smyth that English singers are at their best in what the French call *opéra-comique* with spoken dialogue, and that that is really what English audiences enjoy most. This view is probably correct, and in any case a prolonged course of *opéra-comique* in English would be the best possible training of both English singers and English audiences—to say nothing of English composers as well—preparatory to an eventual development of English opera on the most magnificent and serious scale.

The last few years have shown us clearly that there is a large and most enthusiastic public, and a public consisting almost entirely of *young* people, for opera in English; those who lament the disappearance of Italian and German opera in London are mostly of a much older generation. Since the days of Queen Anne the Italian Opera in London has always been the meeting-place of "Court and Society", and a hundred years ago it was the Italian Opera in Paris, not the national French Opera, which commanded the highest prices and attracted the most fashionable audiences. Are we going to see all that return as before after the present war is over? An attempt will certainly be made to revive it, though of course the more venerable among us will deplore the days of Melba, just as Chorley in 1830 deplored the operatic grandeurs of the Regency.

If Sir Thomas returns to his native shores, is he going to espouse the cause of opera in English, or will his innate romanticism lead him to look backwards? His book gives us no very definite indication, and no doubt he wishes to keep his own secret. E. J. D.

Sir Henry Wood: Fifty Years of the "Proms". Edited by Ralph Hill and C. B. Rees. Pp. 64, illustrated. (B.B.C.) 1944. 2s. 6d.

This booklet comprises three groups of essays; the first, by W. W. Thompson, Thomas Burke and C. B. Rees, being mainly historical; the second, by Arnold Bax, Bernard Shore, Solomon, George Baker and Ralph Hill, being, on the whole, more adulatory than critical; the third, a diverting four-part rhapsody by a famous non-*musikalisch* quartet—Frank Dobson, C. E. M. Joad, James Agate and Sacheverell Sitwell. Although the contributors are tied by a doubly unifying thread in having to discuss Sir Henry and the "Proms", the articles are not fused convincingly into a homogeneous whole, but fascinate more in their variety than in their unity of purpose.

Of the last group, Frank Dobson's paper is much the most valuable. He draws a parallel between music and sculpture which is genuinely illuminating and tempts one to suggest that he may be more truly musical than many musicians. Joad gives us another slice of his testament which reads pleasantly and reminds us of two *obiter dicta* first expounded by Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds respectively. Agate says he is quite the wrong person to contribute to this symposium, and then, in consternation at his own assumed modesty, writes another fragment of autobiography without reference to Max Beerbohm. Sitwell says Bartók is the only figure in European music who has anything left to say, that Italy and Germany are mute and silenced and that France could only recover after a long recuperation. He seems to have forgotten Ernest Bloch, and after the war we shall probably find that in Germany at least composition is far from being moribund. But the recent work of Vaughan Williams, Rubbra and perhaps Britten and Walton lends some support to the view that British music may be approaching another golden age: certainly such a renaissance is long overdue.

Ralph Hill's essay is handicapped by the law of libel; of course, in point of fact, all critics always are whenever they feel the urge to discharge their duties really conscientiously. Ideally the critic must be free to apportion blame as well as praise, whereas at present he must either (a) write praise, sycophantic or otherwise, (b) concoct a paragraph or two of meaningless verbiage, (c) maintain the silence of sheer disgust, or (d) risk an adverse criticism by inference (provided it is carefully wrapped in verbose and ambiguous prose). This lily-livered law for the protection of the puny must be revised to allow freedom of comment. Meanwhile Hill does his best and provides five very stimulating pages, though one *would* like to know the identities of his Monsieur W and Messrs. X, Y and Z.

Space precludes more detailed discussion of this on the whole excellent booklet which is profusely illustrated, though there is one drawing which looks more like a sea-lion than Vaughan Williams, and another which is more porpoiselike than Beechamesque. It is our privilege and pleasure (which we treasure beyond measure) to assure the B.B.C. that in thus commemorating fifty years of the "Proms" their duty has, in one respect, been done.

G. N. S.

Gramophone Records

There are now three standard rates of Purchase Tax on gramophone records; for those acquired by the retailer on or after 13th April, 1943, the tax will be:—

2s. 1½d. on 3s. 3d. records, 2s. 7½d. on 4s., and 3s. 11d. on 6s.

But stocks previously held will be sold subject to tax at the rates shown in previous issues of this journal.

VOCAL

*Bizet : Pastorale,** and

*Godard : Chanson d'Estelle.**

Maggie Teyte and Gerald Moore.

His Master's Voice DA 1840. 4s.

Handel : If God be for us, and

Rejoice greatly ("Messiah").

Isobel Baillie and Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Sargent.

Columbia DX 1154. 4s.

Rossini : 'Tis the spring of all invention, and

Fifteen my number is ("Barber of Seville").

Webster Booth, Dennis Noble and Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Cameron.

His Master's Voice C 3398. 4s.

INSTRUMENTAL

Beethoven : Sonata for Horn and Piano, Op. 17.*

Dennis Brain and Denis Matthews.

Columbia DX 1152-53. 8s.

Dohnanyi : Variations on a Nursery Tune, Op. 25.

Cyril Smith and Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Sargent.

Columbia DX 1148-50. 12s.

*Handel-Halvorsen : Passacaglia.**

Heifetz and Primrose.

His Master's Voice DB 6170. 6s.

Khachatourian : Toccata, and

Medtner : Fairytale, Op. 42, No. 1.

Moiseiwitsch.

His Master's Voice C 3397. 4s.

Schumann : Sonata in A minor, Op. 105.

Busch and Serkin.

His Master's Voice DB 3371-72. 12s.

ORCHESTRAL

*Copland : El Salon Mexico,** and

arr. Stravinsky : Song of the Volga Boatmen.

Boston Symphony Orchestra, c. Koussevitsky.

His Master's Voice DB 3812-13. 12s.

Ireland : A London Overture, and

J. Strauss arr. Jacob : Radetzky March.

Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Sargent.

Columbia DX 1155-56. 8s.

* Strongly recommended.

*Saint-Saens : Le Rouet d'Omphale, Op. 31.**

Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Sargent.

Columbia DX 1151. 4s.

*Vaughan Williams : Symphony No. 5 in D.**

Hallé Orchestra, c. Barbirolli.

His Master's Voice C 3388-92. 20s.

(Recorded under the auspices of the British Council.)

Musically the Bizet and Godard songs are of light weight and they have received a corresponding lightness of touch from both artists and recording engineers, with an entirely happy result. In the Handel, Isobel Baillie is for once below her best and *Rejoice greatly* is so disappointing that it must be taken as a command rather than an encouragement. The extract from *The Barber* is quite a good example of opera in English, competently sung, well played and adequately recorded—yet altogether lacking the sparkle which is so essential to this kind of frivolity. Such music should effervesce from bar to bar and must be played in the Italian style: readers who remember the inspired inanities of Baccaloni and Stabile in *Don Pasquale* at Glyndebourne will know well enough what I am driving at: however, if we cannot have the real thing this is a respectable substitute.

This Beethoven horn Sonata is a great test for both players, a test which in this case each artist has completely mastered. It is austere, and in a diabolical fashion humorous by turns, and in performance keeps the listener uneasy, half expecting the horn player to make one of those slips which on this instrument are always so obvious. But on this record all goes very well and we have a valuable addition to the gramophone repertory of Beethoven. The Handel *Passacaglia* is taken from the harpsichord *Suite No. 7* in G minor and has been very effectively arranged by Halvorsen. The performance by Heifetz and Primrose is one of the finest exhibitions of concerted string virtuosity we have ever heard. Unfortunately the recording is a bad example of the worst American tendencies and at times makes the combined violin and viola tone sound like an accordion band (compare the cadenza in the first movement of the Sammons-Tertis record of the Mozart *Sinfonia Concertante*); even so, this is an outstanding disc on which the playing is a pure delight from beginning to end. The issue of the Dohnanyi *Variations* is a good workmanlike set: but the Khachatourian, Medtner and Schumann pieces are fundamentally dull.

Copland's *El Salon Mexico* is a grand example of impressionist scoring, in similar vein to Respighi's *Brazilian Impressions*, and it receives a superb performance from the Boston Orchestra under Koussevitsky. This is one type of modern music at its scintillating best. Quite another type is John Ireland's *London Overture*. About thirty years ago, with *The Forgotten Rite*, Ireland established himself as a fine artist with a genuine creative imagination; one has reason to believe that this imaginative gift is still with him, but the pedestrian monotony of the bus conductor's cry is hardly material enough for a concert overture, and there is little else about the work that is distinctive. The performance has been a fine one and the recording is adequate. *Le Rouet d'Omphale* is a piece of what may perhaps be called "occasional music" and must be played in a spirit of real bravado in order to make its full effect. This record gives us everything we have any right to expect and is typical of the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra at its best. The fifth Symphony of Vaughan Williams has been chosen as the fifth work to be sponsored in recording by the British Council: Hubert Foss has already written in glowing terms in *THE MUSIC REVIEW* of this latest product of the genius of Dr. Vaughan Williams. It is evidently the product of a mature mind with something more than mere technique to guide its manifestations. In modern music one gets so tired of technique and technique alone, unrelieved by any spark of happy inspiration, that the appearance of such a masterpiece as this brings instantaneous delight which deepens and expands as one's

* Strongly recommended.

knowledge of the music progresses. In this record Barbirolli has achieved a triumph with the Hallé Orchestra, and, on the whole, the recording as such is extremely good. Only the second movement is at all unsatisfactory: here the outlines are blurred and attention to the score has shown that a fair amount of detail is inaudible. But this is not a serious blemish and the presence of the written page enables one to imagine the little that one cannot hear. The Oxford University Press will produce a score as soon as circumstances permit. This is a very great work and the records are indispensable to everyone who wishes to absorb one of the finest products of modern British music. G. N. S.

OBITUARY

The death has occurred in July of Dr. W. Gillies Whittaker, professor of music in the University of Glasgow, and of Eda Kersey, the celebrated violinist.

Dr. Whittaker was an authority on J. S. Bach and the British Elizabethan composers, and was a valued contributor to this journal. Eda Kersey will be remembered for her unvarying integrity of musicianship and for her interpretation of the Bax Concerto.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY MUSIC FACULTY

The University of Oxford has recently established a Faculty of Music with the following members:—

Sir Hugh P. Allen, M.A., D.Mus., New College.
H. K. Andrews, M.A., D.Mus., New College.
T. H. W. Armstrong, M.A., D.Mus., Christ Church.
R. O. Morris, M.A., D.Mus., New College.
E. Walker, M.A., D.Mus., Balliol.
E. J. Wellesz, M.A., Hon.D.Mus., Lincoln.

The foundation of such a faculty is in itself a source of satisfaction to those of us who are interested in the development of a flourishing musical tradition in this country, and we note with particular interest that Egon Wellesz has been appointed lecturer in musical history.

LOUIS COHEN

On 25 July the BBC Northern Orchestra gave a performance of the Schubert C minor Symphony which was notable for its sense of style and perfection of detail. The conductor was Louis Cohen.

